



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

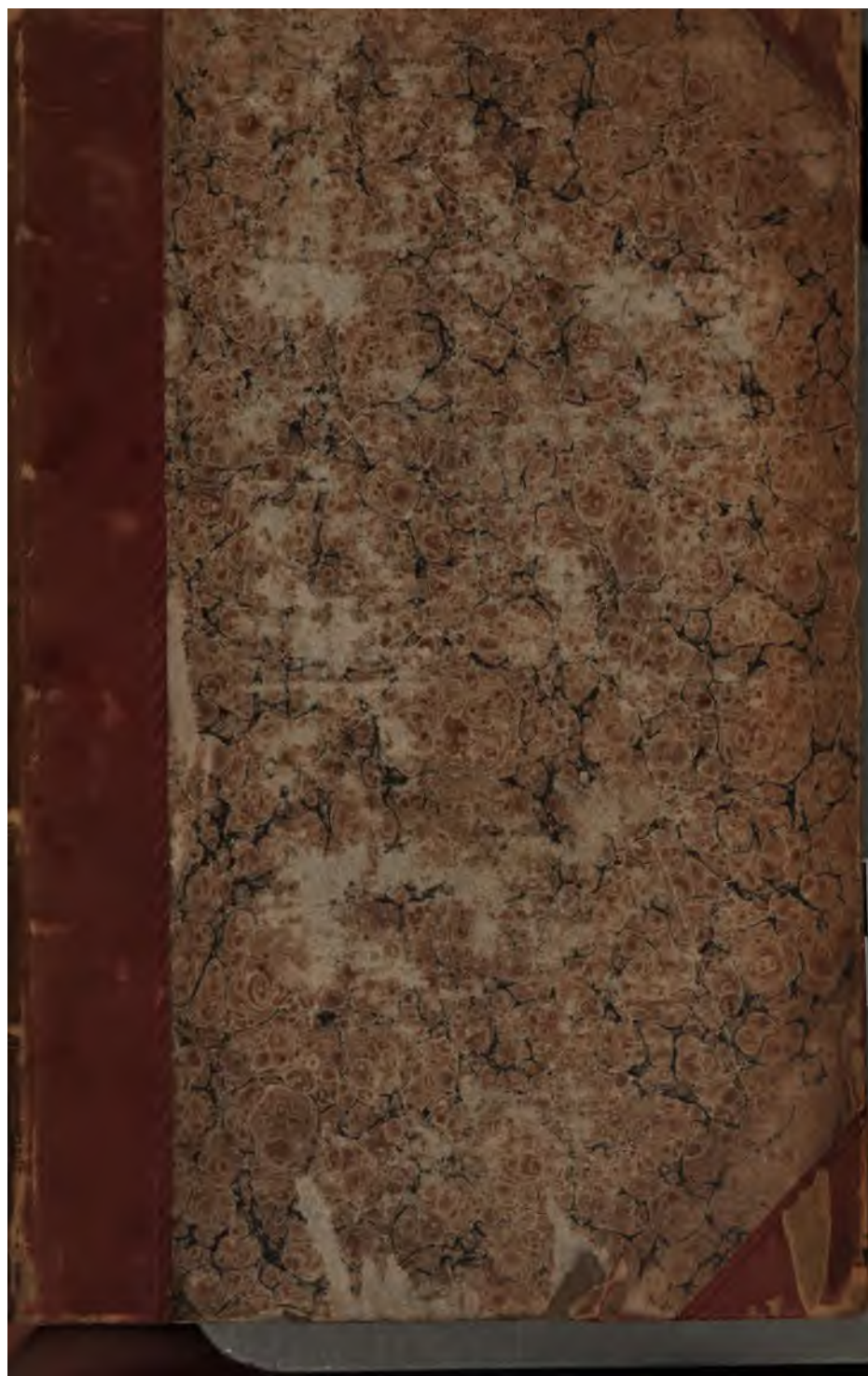
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

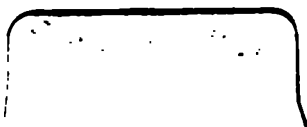




600011610F

29

354.



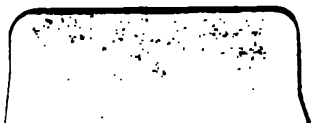


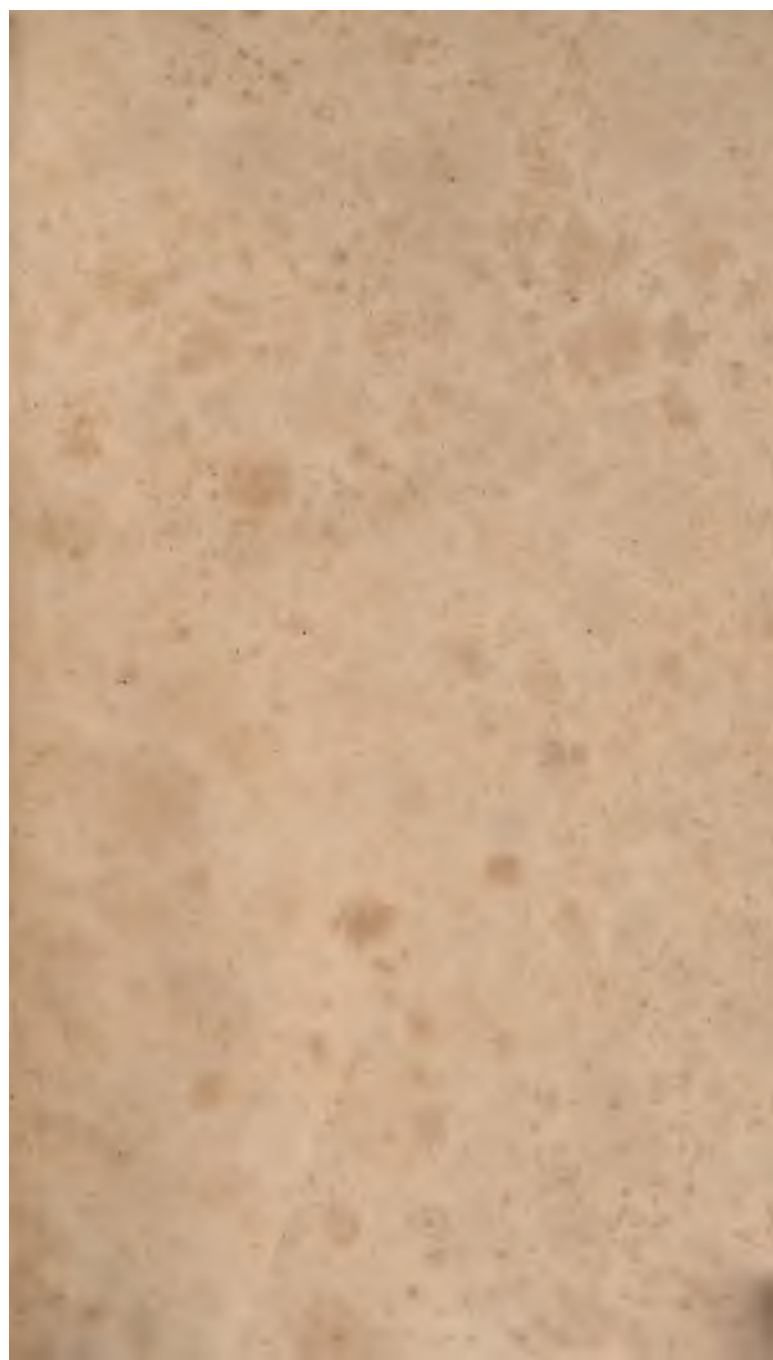


600011610F

29

354.













**THE BALL;**

**OR,**

**A GLANCE AT ALMACK'S**

**IN 1829.**



**THE BALL;**

**OR,**

**A GLANCE AT ALMACK'S**

**IN 1829.**

**LONDON :**

**PRINTED BY HENRY DIGGENS, LEICESTER STREET,  
LEICESTER SQUARE.**

N. 1829

# THE BALL;

OR,

## A GLANCE AT ALMACK'S

IN 1829.



---

"To dance as if a person had passed all his life in the study of it, a man of sense should be ashamed of: yet to be totally *ignorant* of it, and the *grace* and *comportment* which, by learning it, is acquired, shows a man of learning either an ill-natured stolid, or ill-bred pedant."

---

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

---

1829.

354.



**MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED**

**TO THE**

**NOBILITY AND GENTRY**

**BY THEIR VERY OBEDIENT,**

**HUMBLE SERVANT,**

**G. YATES.**

**33, SOHO SQUARE,  
LONDON.**





## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

THE following pages owe their existence to a strong persuasion, that in order to the preservation of that highly cultivated and polished state of society to which we have in this country happily attained (under the auspices of a monarch—pronounced by the concurring voice of all European

courts, to be the “best bred gentleman in Europe,)” an establishment of the nature of that referred to in the title is essentially important, as forming a focus, or concentration, of the highest *orders* in the state : from such a centre shoot forth with full radiance those lights, which, insinuating themselves in fair proportion amongst the subordinate ranks of society, serve to direct and regulate the whole.

But if this lofty *fount* be not carefully watched and preserved in a state of purity, disadvantages, not advantages, must ensue ; for though the “lights”

which emanate from it may, through neglect, become “false lights,” their influence will remain unabated! It is then the perception that such disadvantages *have* crept into this important establishment, that has excited the following animadversions; accompanied by some suggestions, which, if honoured by the notice of the fair and noble patronesses, might, it is most respectfully submitted, be attended with very beneficial results.

All that does not tend immediately to this, the main object of his work, will still, as the Author humbly persuades

himself, be found more or less relevant to it—sufficiently so, at least, to warrant its introduction into the volume.

# CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

	Page
HIGH Birth should be distinguished by an elegant deportment .....	5
Young Gentlemen turned into Jockies and <i>Jarvies</i> ..	6
Their Behaviour in a Ball-room.....	7
Great indecorum in Gentlemen's Dress at the As- sembly .....	ib.
Anecdote of Lady C. C. ....	10
His Majesty's Minuet.....	11
Lackies and Barbers turned into Dancing-masters ...	12
Birth-night Balls at St. James's.....	13

	Page
An Account of the same, with an attempt at a description of the large Court-hoop and long train	14
Anecdote of the late Duke of Rutland.....	23

## CHAPTER II.

Tailors—the professors most esteemed by the youth of the present day .....	30
The “Elegant Shapes of the English Women” disguised .....	31
The best Dancers not necessarily the best Teachers ..	35
The <i>Grande Pirouette</i> by Females at the Opera ....	37
M. Le Picq and Madame Rossi .....	38
Shakspeare’s <i>Macbeth</i> ballet-ised! .....	ib.
A Ridiculous Circumstance that occurred in one of the most impressive scenes .....	39
The late Sir John Gallini.....	42
Hints to Actors and Vocalists .....	45
A Looking-glass strongly recommended .....	47
Anecdote of the late Lord Sandwich .....	48
Crowded Rooms injurious to limbs and lungs.....	49
A Cavalier lost in the figure of L’Eté.....	52

# CHAPTER III.

	Page
Almack's Ball.....	53
An Attempt to Dance where there is not room to move .....	54
The Waltz .....	55
The Quadrille Dance turned into a tête à tête .....	57
The Grecian Quadrille .....	ib.
The sombre appearance at Almack's of the Gentle- mens' black dresses .....	59
A Royal Rotunda .....	64
Vestris, Senior—and Vestris, Junior.....	66
Doctor Burney, Pacchierotti, and <i>le dieu de la</i> <i>danse</i> .....	69

# CHAPTER IV.

Locke, Xenophon, and Quintilian.....	74
Old Gentlemen learning to Dance—Messrs. Socrates, Cato, and others.....	81
Anecdote of M. Marcel.....	82
Every <i>Maitre de Danse</i> not a <i>Maitre de Grace</i> ....	84



## CHAPTER V.

	Page
Hints to Private Governesses—more expected from them than human nature can perform.....	85
Hints to the Heads of Schools.....	87
Hints to Parents.....	ib.

## CHAPTER VI.

Useful Observations applicable to every age, from In- fancy onwards .....	104
--	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

What Exercises are indispensable .....	124
--	-----

## CHAPTER VIII.

Curious Extracts—ancient and modern....	135
Dancing from some thousand years back, to that of the present day.....	141

**CONTENTS.**

**XV**

**CHAPTER IX.**

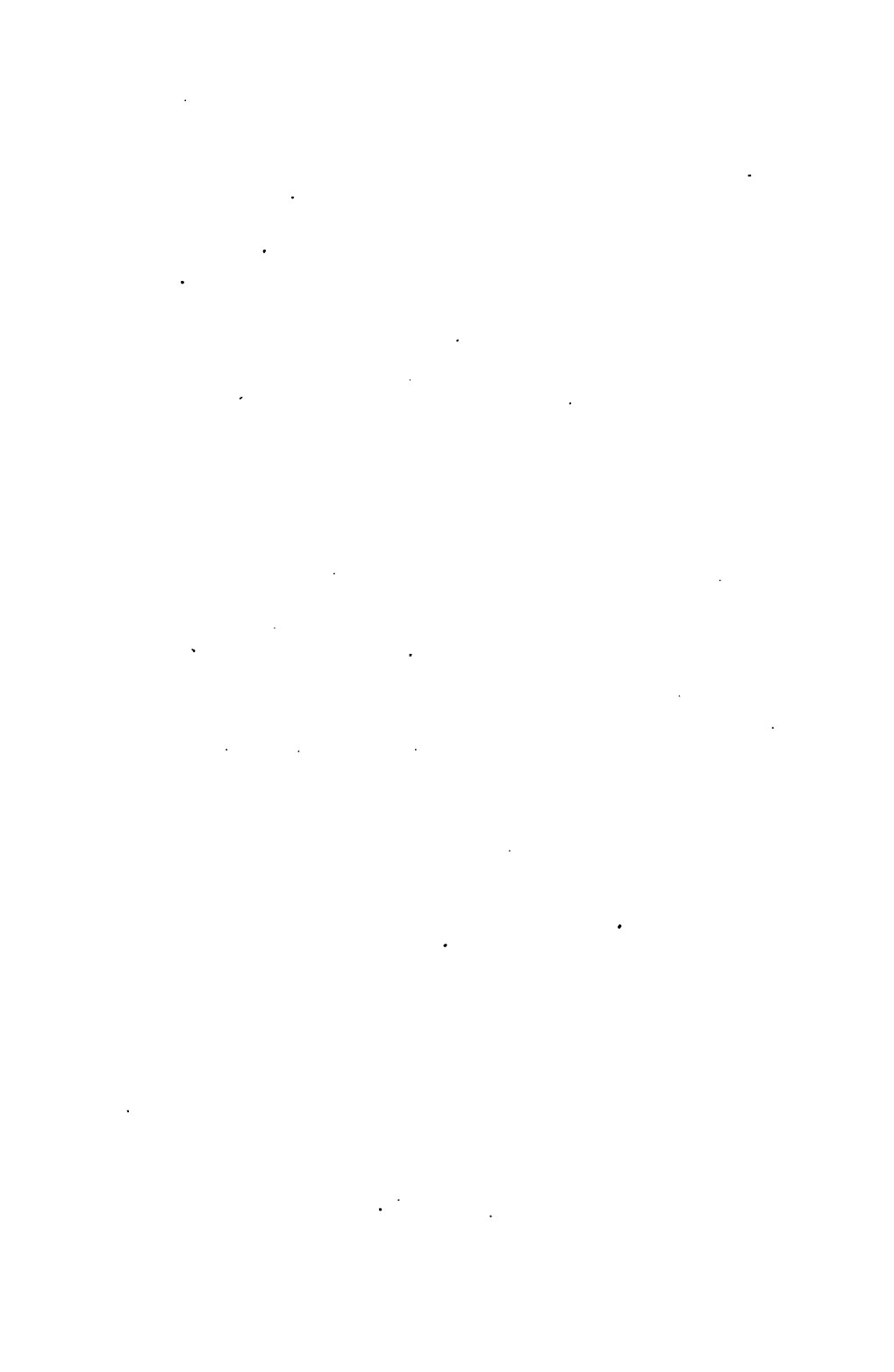
	Page
<b>Teachers of Dancing.....</b>	<b>156</b>

**CHAPTER X.**

<b>The First Assembly in Russia .....</b>	<b>170</b>
---	------------

**CHAPTER XI.**

<b>A Summary Account of Dancing in different parts of the World.....</b>	<b>175</b>
--	------------

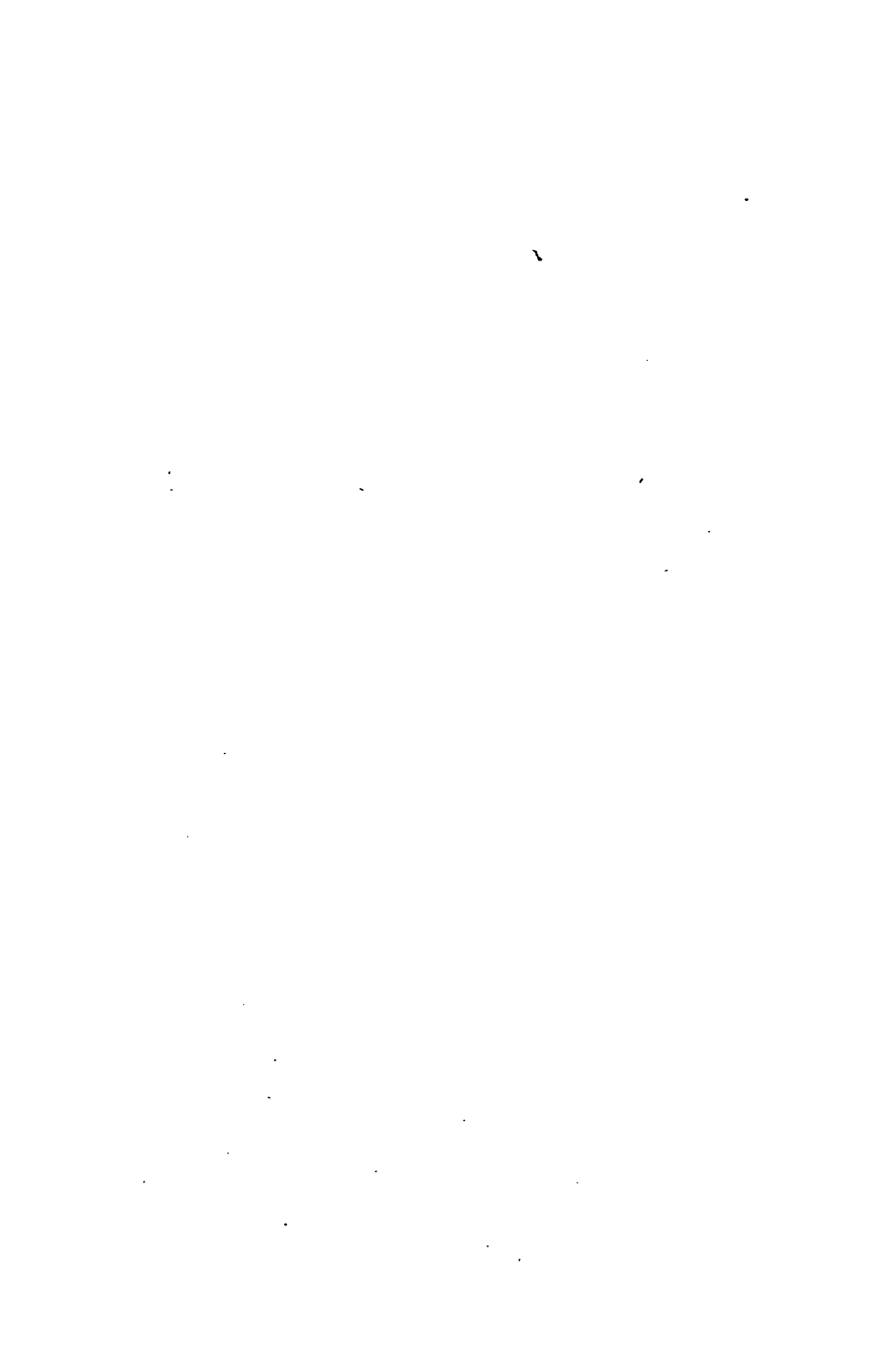


**THE BALL;**

**OR,**

**A GLANCE AT ALMACK'S.**

**B**



## PROLOGUE.

---

### ON DANCING.

“ YOUR Cynic Sages, dull, unpolish’d fellows,  
With formal cant, and rigid satire, tell us,  
That dancing is an idle, wanton fashion,  
The vain amusement of as vain a nation ;  
That women should avoid such tempting schools,  
And only move by frozen Virtue’s rules.  
I own their sober maxims partly right ;  
Virtue’s a gem with native lustre bright,  
But, polish’d, shines with a superior light.  
Let rosy youth embloom the sprightly fair,  
And beauty mould her with a lover’s care ;  
If motion to the whole denies its grace,  
In vain would beauty recommend a face.

With blunted charms, and unavailing eyes,  
Such awkward maids relinquish beauty's prize.  
'Tis Dancing only heightens every charm,  
And gives each feature double power to warm ;  
Like goddesses, it shows us how to move,  
And adds a Juno to the Queen of Love.  
At balls, gay Cupid takes his fav'rite stand,  
And gives the blushing fair to Hymen's hand ;  
Glad Hymen woos the virgin into wife,  
And leads her through the various Dance of Life :  
That partner lost, and age advancing on,  
We truly say, " our dancing days are done."

# THE BALL.

---

## CHAPTER I.

No very long retrospect is necessary to reach that period when the *Lady* or *Gentleman*—whether *en plein costume* or *en deshabille* might be distinguished by their gait alone. Fashion has now, in a great measure, thrown down the barrier that marked the different classes of society, and much confusion has resulted. The distinguishing mark of gentility consisted in a



certain grace and ease of deportment, proceeding from an early and continued cultivation of the figure and action, alike remote from vulgarity and constraint.

Before the minuet was banished from the ball-room, the carriage of both ladies and gentlemen was decidedly more refined than in the present day.

Our young gentlemen now affect to shun, as a stigma on their manliness, a lesson in dancing ! For this they substitute the training, and emulate the graces of jockies and coachmen ; and as they assume no small glory for their success in these, they would doubtless feel a corresponding shame from the observance of those attentions which have heretofore been regarded as the indispensable characteristics of politeness, even to the movement of the hat in bowing to a lady !

This repelling rusticity finds its way even into

the ball-room, where the young aspirant of the turf and the stable, having cast off his boots, at once, without further change of dress, thinks himself authorised to appear. It is much to be regretted that the *exclusive system* at the assembly does not extend to those gentlemen who are guilty of indecorum in dress, as it totally destroys the *coup-d'œil* of the otherwise general brilliance. Who would believe, that had not been there, that in the first assembly in the land, consisting, for the most part, of our principal nobility,—the gentlemen are mostly dressed in black trowsers, their street-walking attire, with round hats, and some even with black silk handkerchiefs round their necks? There is, in fact, little or no distinction in appearance betwixt their dress and that of the waiters who hold the cords!

A very sensible man once asserted, " that

there is certainly some sympathy between dress and manners, and we can easily see how one breach of conventional gentility may lead to another, and that to a third, till all decorum is lost in actual rudeness!" What an opinion must foreigners form of the politeness of those Englishmen who are content with such an appearance, in the presence of ladies, attired in superb dresses decorated with diamonds? Consistent with this culpable neglect of due preparation for his appearance in an assembly of rank and fashion, on the part of our modern young *gentleman*, are his deportment and conduct when there, and actually engaged in the quadrille, when he is content to walk through the dance with a marked indifference to his partner and those around him, instead of participating with them its full spirit and interest, or having the politeness of at least seeming to do so.

The waltz, which in its native design, and with its due gentleness of motion, is so well fitted to display grace of attitude, but which is now by the influence of fashion converted into a coarse and vulgar romp, is the only kind of dance consonant to the taste of the young gentleman above described. He has, indeed, this advantage in a crowd,—that his total ignorance of the art of dancing may not be remarked. It is a trite saying, that “when things are at the worst they must mend:” this, and this only affords a hope that we may one day return to the decorum and good sense of our ancestors in these matters, and that the perfection of dancing may again consist in something else than in jumping and twirling, and a lady or gentleman may have a chance to recognise each other’s rank in society by manner and address, independent of an inquiry into “birth, parentage, and education.”

The whimsical influence of those whom the circles of *haut ton* have agreed to acknowledge as their leaders, is strikingly displayed in the following anecdote recorded of Lady C. C., the first authority of her day, in this way. This lady having one evening discovered, in an assembly of fashionables, to her no small gratification, that her every gesture was the subject of imitation, ventured an experiment on the spot—*running* with a short rapid step through the dance, and denominating it to her partner and to those immediately around her—the *partridge run* ! The partridge run became the universal motion throughout the room before the expiration of the evening !

In the days of the Noverres, Gallinis, Yates's, Fierilles, and Le Picq's, names yet fresh in the remembrance of our elder nobility, teachers of dancing were comparatively few

in number, but all were well studied in their art.

The genuine grace and elegance of his present Majesty's minuet, which bore pace with his consummate accomplishments in all the fine arts, was the model which, flowing from the fount, as the St. James's balls might well be called, of elegance and refinement, naturally and readily spread through all polite society, and was transferred, in due course, from the dance to the manners generally; and had not this real test of grace and knowledge in the art been laid aside, there would have been no such multiplication of pseudo-teachers as subsequently appeared, and who made their way amongst the public under the cover of the noisy bustling reel, to frisk and jump about in which, and even to show others how to do the like *en maître*, was readily within the compass of any shrewd sprightly youth

who would only be at the trouble to transfer himself from behind his mistress's chair, or lay down the curling-tongs in exchange for the kit !\* Such was once the rage for reel-dancing, that the principal schools in London were under the necessity of employing two masters ; and it is a fact, that the reel-masters had the most pupils, though there was a D'Egville then teaching in the school !

This vitiated taste of the fashionable public, soon imposed itself on our Opera dancers, amongst whom (in the serious character) we had been accustomed to look for the perfection of the art. Even the most eminent in the profession found it necessary, in order to keep alive any attention on the part of their patrons, to seek that applause through the medium of efforts to

\* It might, perhaps, be a benefit to the public, if masters, as well as physicians, were obliged to take out a diploma.

spin like a top, or jump like a squirrel, which was no longer awarded to grace of movement and elegance of attitude. And thus has this interesting and salutary art sustained a deterioration from which there is little hope that it will soon recover, except through the taste and judgment of parents, who it may be hoped, will instil into the minds of their children a better sense of what is truly pleasing and becoming.

The author asked Senor Antonio, the performer on the rope, why he had discontinued the great variety of graceful attitudes he displayed the first season he performed in London? His answer was, "The English applaud me most when I surprise and frighten them;—on the Continent, they are best pleased with a graceful performance!"

The birth-night balls at St. James's, during the last reign, displayed the best private dancing any where to be seen. These were continued till



within a few years of its close ; when the king's declining health no longer empowered him to sustain that evening ceremonial, added to all that on birth-days preceded it. Notwithstanding the large hoop, which was the court costume of that day for the ladies, they acquitted themselves most gracefully—disposing also with great dexterity, of the additional hindrance of a very long train, the Lord Chamberlain rendering only a slight assistance in its adjustment.

When the office of court dancing-master was discontinued, this nobleman acted in the two-fold capacity of Chamberlain and Master of the Ceremonies.

As some of my readers may not have been present at one of these balls, the following short account may not prove unacceptable.

Previous to these occasions, public notice was given,—that those ladies and gentlemen who

intended to dance at the approaching birth-night ball, should forward an intimation of such intention to the Lord Chamberlain's office on or before a certain day.

On the evening of the ball, the Lord Chamberlain, with his wand of office, stood within the railing that encompassed the space for dancing, with the list of dancers in his hand. When the ball-room was as full as was thought convenient, the door of entrance for the company was closed till the ball was over; and when their Majesties some little time after entered by another door, the yeomen and gentlemen pensioners quitted the room, having previously stood at the barrier that enclosed the space reserved for dancing. On their Majesties' entrance the court band, stationed in the music gallery at the opposite end of the room, commenced playing the march in Judas

Maccabeus, which by the king's command was always performed on this occasion.

After their Majesties had walked round the inside of the space set apart as before mentioned, and had spoken a few words with those of the nobility that were near enough, they retired to their chairs, (for there was no throne) and this was the signal for the band to cease. Then the Lord Chamberlain advanced to the Prince of Wales and his royal sister, making his obeisance before them, on which they arose and performed the same ceremony before their Majesties, retiring backwards until they arrived at the opposite end of the open space, when the band immediately commenced playing a minuet.

The court dancing-master (Monsieur Desnoyer) spread the lady's train, which was exceedingly long and heavy with gold or silver, and which,

during the respectful preliminary, had been supported on the hoop. Having concluded a minuet, the obeisance was repeated to their Majesties; and in the same manner proceeded the other members of the royal family and nobility according to precedence, going through the same ceremonies.

The gentleman did not go up a second time to make obeisance if he was again required to dance another minuet (as was generally the case); but waited for another lady, who was under the necessity of going through the awful ceremony alone.

A country dance or two followed when the minuets were over; for cotillons or quadrilles were not then in fashion at court.

It is difficult to describe the whimsical appearance of the large court hoops during this

dance. It must, however, be admitted, that no extent of dexterity that could be employed by our noble belles of that day, or their fair daughters, in disposing of this curious item of courtly costume, could render it other than the most absurd and grotesque appurtenance that ever disfigured and encumbered the female form. Not even the familiar acquaintance with its appearance which length of years, from one reign to another, had established, could divest it of a large share of ludicrous excitement when put in motion by the lively dance; and though on these occasions every thing was conducted with an air of reserve and *etiquettish* seriousness, the spectacle that these *light* dances afforded, notwithstanding the *softening down* that the utmost dexterity could effect, could not but excite a certain degree of defiance. Every one who had the opportunity of attending them, had laboured to ac-

commodate her neighbour—but this could hardly be done, as the allotted space was not sufficient for the movement of her own person.

When the whole party was put in motion, but little trace of a regular dance remained; all was a perfect maze; and the *cutting* in and out (as the fraternity of the whip would phrase it) of these cumbrous machines presented to the mind only the figure of a most formidable affray.

The nearest assimilation to this strange exhibition of the dance in full career, at all familiar to our minds, is the prancing of the basket-horses in Mr. Peake's humourous farce of the *Quadrupeds*.

An entertaining variety of appearance arose also from the conformity of the steps to the diversified measure of the tune. The jig mea-

sure, which corresponds to the *canter* in a horse's paces, produced a strong bounding up

and down of the hoop—and the gavotte measure, which corresponds to the short trot, produced a tremulous and agitated motion. The numerous ornaments, also, with which the hoops were bespread and decorated—the festoons—the tassels—the rich embroidery—all of a most *catching* and *taking* nature, every now and then, affectionately hitched together in unpremeditated and close embrace. To the parties in action, it is not difficult to suppose these combinations might prove something short of perfectly agreeable, more especially, as on such occasions as these, some of the fair daughters of our courtly belles were undergoing the awful ordeal of a first ball-room appearance, on whom these contingencies would inflict ten-fold embarrassment. At the same time, it may be observed, that this concatenation of petty distresses—the pretty suffusion of countenance

incident to them—the attentive assiduity of the gentlemen to render assistance—the affable enjoyment of the whole scene by their Majesties, altogether disposed the company to an hilarity of tone, which was soon after enhanced by the opening of the buffets for refreshment, which took place on their Majesties retiring from the scene of action. The lips of the company were then unsealed, and the how d'yes, the friendly shakes and greetings of all sorts and kinds, flew about in unrestrained good humour, and in about an hour after, all had departed.

From the period at which the court balls were, for the reason assigned, discontinued, the graceful minuet, alas! fell also into disuse;—the minuet, which might be regarded, as it were, the grammar of the art, and the general adaptation of which constituted a decided style of that day. In the present, we fear, it cannot be said that there exists



any distinct style of dancing. Formerly it was the custom of the nobility to take lessons every season, in preparation for the birth-night balls. His present Majesty, and his royal brothers, considered themselves under the same kind of obligation, and were attended by M. Le Picq for that purpose.

The author has been frequently amused in his early time, when attending Le Picq as his *aide-de-camp*, in his visits to those ladies who were practising their minuets for the court-ball, by their contrivances of attaching to the back part of the large hoop—said hoop being then divested of its brilliant covering of gold, silver, and diamonds, and appearing in all its native simplicity of *bent-cane* and *glazed calico*—a sheet or tablecloth in substitution for the long train, subsequently to be appended ! Such a *tout-ensemble* might well be supposed to operate somewhat on

the risible muscles of a youth, at no time much indisposed to merriment; but on one occasion which he will here describe, the due reserve of the humble *aide-de-camp* was utterly lost, and he irresistibly gave way to a laugh outright. On one of the ball-nights it was her Grace of Rutland's pleasure to desire a lesson from M. Le Picq, shortly before entering her chair for St. James's, in order, no doubt, to have the latest impression of his valuable hints. M. Le Picq, thinking he could, perhaps, convey these hints more forcibly as a looker-on, appointed his highly-favoured *aide-de-camp*, with her Grace's obliging concurrence, to perform the minuet with her! This honourable promotion, the blaze of brilliancy (no cane and calico now) presented to his dazzled sight by one of the most superb dresses the eye could meet—her Grace's surpassing and far-famed personal charms—heightened as they were by her enchant-

ing affability and vivacity—these, in combination, could hardly fail a little to intoxicate the ardent mind of a young aspirant in his profession ; and, *par consequence*, no minuet, perhaps, as far as he was concerned, was ever danced with less attention. The grand catastrophe above adverted to is yet to come. His Grace of Rutland, who had in his high calling of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, been some time officially, as well as by loyalty and good taste, habituated to bestow all festive honours on their Majesties' birth-days, could hardly be suspected of relaxing his pious attention in this particular on his return from office ; nor can it be doubted that he had on that very day, her Majesty's (Charlotte's) birth-day, been paying it due honors in many a loyal potation. Having returned to his mansion while her Grace was yet engaged as above, he desired the privilege of being present ; thus affording to

himself at once, an occasion of keeping alive the loyal impressions of the day, and of admiring his beautiful consort, an object of which he might indeed be proud, had his grade in society been still higher than it was, nay, had it reached royalty itself!

In order to assimilate the scene which was shortly after to follow, more closely to the reality, his Grace determined *once more* to become the representative of majesty, having already practised a little in that way, and accordingly took his seat with all the dignity of which *circumstances* would admit, at the head of the room, as his Majesty was accustomed to do before the minuets began; but *her* Majesty was, on this occasion, also to be represented, as she was used to divide the presidency, side by side, with her royal consort! What was to be done? no very suitable person being at hand to fill this character,—his Grace

at length fell upon the happy expedient of uniting both king and queen in his own person ! This was indeed an *accession* of dignity beyond all that he had enjoyed before. The ingenious device was carried into effect by dividing his seat as agreeably as the nature of the case would admit, between two supposed royal chairs. During the minuet, all was *comme il faut* ; until the end, when her Grace and her happy partner, as he truly felt himself at that moment, approached their supposed majesties, and, according to usage, made their obeisance. His Grace, having determined not to be short in his representation of the politeness with which their *real* majesties acknowledged the same, made a gracious inclination of his body forward for that purpose, which communicated to the two chairs a wicked disposition to slide about a little, insomuch that his Grace, in an effort to restore them to their due con-

tiguity, was completely floored with his heels uppermost.—“How are the mighty fallen!”—This appalling catastrophe—this headlong downfall of *would-be* royalty, was followed instantaneously and irresistibly, by a genuine, unequivocal broad laugh on the part of the *aide-de-camp*, which drew from Le Picq a rebuke in the way of a look, that his, at that moment, unhappy *élève* (howbeit so happy the moment before) will never forget.

## CHAPTER II.

DANCING, like most other accomplishments, in order to be retained, must not be neglected for any considerable length of time. Any one, for instance, who could formerly *fence* well, but who had for some time discontinued the exercise, would stand no chance with one in constant practice. It may be remarked by the way, that this accomplishment has also of late years been much neglected, which, perhaps, may furnish another reason for the defective deport-

ment of the *beaux* of the present day. Sir Jonah Barrington, (Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, in Ireland), makes a very just though severe allusion to this neglect of the art of fencing.\*

When it is considered that two accomplishments so necessary to form the gentleman are now totally neglected, the wonder must cease that so many of the rising generation are found so frequently *grace-less*. In recompence for the deficiency above complained of, our modern fashionables about town are devoted to their

\* "Fencing with the small sword is certainly a most beautiful and noble exercise; its acquirement confers a fine, bold, manly carriage, a dignified mien, a firm step, and graceful motion; but, alas! its practisers are now supplanted by contemptible groups of smirking quadrillers with unweaponed belts, stuffed breasts, and strangled loins! a set of squeaking dandies whose sex may be readily mistaken, or, I should rather say, is of no consequence."

JONAH BARRINGTON'S *Sketches of his Own Times*.



tailors, and take infinite pains to truss up their persons to the obstruction of all graceful motion; but, however fashionable may be the dress, it is not difficult to discover a clown who wears it. On the other hand, a graceful carriage ennoble the simplest habit, and a gentleman will not be eclipsed by an unfashionable coat. The same observation will equally apply to the ladies, who merit not a little reproof for disfiguring themselves by following fashions that, they honestly must confess, are preposterous, and that their good sense cannot approve.

Yet the fear of appearing singular overbalances every other consideration. With what quickness will a person who understands drawing, point out faults in a picture, where nature has been outraged by unskilfulness, or want of judgment in the artist. If a painter makes a lady's waist much smaller than her arm or her throat, it is

immediately remarked that the figure is out of drawing, and the proportions not kept. Yet, to follow the fashion of a smaller waist than Nature has designed the person,—

“The stays of deadly steel, in whose embrace  
The tyrant fashion tortures injured grace,”

are resorted to, and females are laced to such a degree of tightness, that if the fashion lasted long their health, if not life, must soon fall a sacrifice. That native elegance of shape which our fair country-women may justly boast, is aided and shown to full advantage by the simplicity of dress that some few years since was adopted; yet the evil genius of fashion had but to suggest something *new*, either borrowed from our continental neighbours, or originating in the caprice or perverse taste of some leader of *haut ton*, and not unfrequently for the purpose of covering

some defect of nature, and the mass of our aspiring young belles implicitly fell into it at whatever risk of disfigurement or distortion to their persons. It might at least be well supposed that when these melancholy evidences of maltreatment have from time to time occurred, such a fashion, with all its train of concomitant evils, would be speedily dismissed ; but not even then ! A remedy for the mischief is now sought in the introduction of exercises of a masculine and robust nature, called gymnastic and calisthenic ; and which, for any beneficial use to females, require to be employed with great caution and reserve, even when abstractedly considered ; but they can neither protect the fair victim from the fatal effects of tight lacing, nor indeed be carried into effect at all under such a state of things.

In adverting to an opinion expressed by a

writer in the Times newspaper some time since on the inappositeness of this exercise for the adoption of females, and in which we for the most part concur, we are also put in mind to express our dissent from that writer in what he goes on to add on the subject of dancing, to wit:—"that it is an art acquired merely by *imitation!*" If that were really the case, to see another dance would prove sufficient instruction, and any dancer would be able to turn teacher at his pleasure. Those who understand the principles on which this art ought to be taught, will not, we trust, entertain such an idea for a moment. The importance, in fact, of exemplification, in this as in other arts, cannot be disputed, but nothing can be more absurd than the notion of its all-sufficiency! It is, indeed, an axiom, with the truth of which we are from our very infancy

imbued—that “ example is better than precept ; ” but it no less deserves to be an axiom, that none but a fool would invalidate one of two good things because the other was better. In the case before us, also, a little observation will show, that of the two, the greater importance decidedly belongs to precept.

Those who teach only by showing their own dancing (not knowing how to teach otherwise),—will give but a superficial knowledge to their pupils, leaving them ignorant of the elementary principles of grace and elegance, their attempt by mere imitation frequently amounting to a mere caricature of what they wish to represent. The true object in learning to dance, is not merely to be able to go through certain evolutions, but to regulate the motion of the limbs, so that an easy and graceful carriage of person may be

visible in every movement. It is this which contributes much to give the outward stamp peculiar to high rank and genteel breeding.

Though it is absurd to suppose, that one who dances well, must therefore *necessarily* be able to teach well, it would be equally so for a person to profess teaching, who was not, or had not been, a dancer!

The writer in the Times newspaper, in another part of his lucubrations on this subject, says, "Women, as they are for various reasons incomparably the most becoming, must also be by far the most efficient teachers of such an accomplishment!" If females could acquire a perfect knowledge of the practice, without the necessity of inhaling the atmosphere of an Opera stage,—if they would go through the necessary study of the art of teaching, and were permitted to teach in male attire, then they might certainly

be considered capable of giving instruction. But this *proviso* is important, as it is very well known that on the proper action of the *knee* chiefly depends the grace of the lower part of the figure ; and unless this is clearly shown by the instructor, and explained, the upper part of the figure also will be materially affected.

In addition to this, too, it may be remarked, that more attention and respect are always shown to a male instructor than to a female, with whom pupils are frequently too familiar.

It is above hinted, how desirable would be a less objectionable school for this art than the Opera stage ; and it is much to be regretted, that the style of dancing adopted by the females is not more *feminine*. *Graceful movements* would receive more genuine applause from every quarter, than is at present awarded to the feat of standing on one leg, with the other pointed

above the shoulder ! or to the eternal *pirouette* between every three or four steps, which all attempt though few really accomplish. It is not judicious to display in public those extraordinary exercises necessary for private practice, and which must be greatly annoying to the female part of the spectators.

It is to be regretted that the ballet of the present day, compared with that of former times, is altogether destitute of interest : we have, indeed, scarcely any thing but dancing now, for pantomimic action has been of late years little studied. Another *Daubervalle* must arise to regenerate this branch of the art, and one which was also, for many years, earnestly followed up by his ingenious *élève*, D'Egville. When Madame Rossi, some years ago, acted to the air of Auld Robin Gray, so truly did her acting tell the story, that the intermediate symphonies



of the air were lost in applause, and she was on every occasion encored ! In the ballet of the Deserter, Le Picq's acting, especially in the prison scene, was so truly pathetic and effective, that the spectators were always affected to tears. Even in the gay and ruthless libertine, Don Juan, however strong the contrast, such a performer was not less true to nature.

But M. Le Picq was not content to stop here. Conscious of his own great powers, he fell upon the bold experiment of ballet-*ising* Shakspeare's Macbeth ! The wondrous display of pantomimic skill in portraying the conscience-torn hero and tyrant was truly astonishing, and fully warranted the boldness of the experiment. The dagger-scene was the most prominent feature, and it was alone sufficient to establish for Le Picq in that day—as another dagger-scene, still more replete with horror, has also

done for a splendid artist in this—the rank of a tragedian of the highest order.\*

A ridiculous circumstance once occurred in one of the most impressive scenes, the witches' cave, when they are broken in upon by Macbeth, dancing around their cauldron, which, for a short time, greatly disturbed the gravity of the audience, and not a little disconcerted the hero of the piece. It was this:—It had been naturally enough judged, that although the pantomimic action of the witches, and others concerned, with the aid of M. Le Picq's instructions, conveyed with ample force the general sense of the drama, the prophetic warnings given to Macbeth by the spectres, which rise from the cauldron, could hardly so well be understood, except by uttering the sentences. M. Barthelemon, therefore, the celebrated

\* Pasta, in *Medea*.

violinist, who was at that time leader of the Opera ballets, proposed at one of the rehearsals, that in this particular instance, speaking (recitative) should be permitted ! Now the original words, as pronounced by the spectre in the play—" Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth ! beware Macduff ; dismiss me : enough,"—were determined to be introduced accordingly. As all solo singers at the Opera House, however, are *Signors* and *Signoras*, it was necessary to appoint one of these (one of the humblest it may be supposed) to be the cauldron spokesman, who was to make the best he could of the English tongue. At the awful moment of invocation, he came forth accordingly with somewhat like the following modification of the prophetic sentence—" Mac-a-bet-a ! Mac-a-bet-a ! Mac-a-bet-a ! beware-a Mac-a-duff-a ! Dismiss-a me : enuff-a !" This was said with a voice of such *bona-fide* flesh and blood extraction,

(albeit from a ghost) as to make its way most pungently to the remotest corners of the theatre, whence it was replied to with roars of laughter. These, however, again subsided, almost as soon as heard, on the perception of the severe annoyance thereupon sustained by M. Le Picq, for whom the personal respect felt by the audience was scarcely less than their admiration of his talents.

Monsieur Le Picq was a well-educated and perfect gentleman. He possessed a suavity of manner that rendered him a favourite with every one, and to that cause may be ascribed the facility with which he brought out the ballets at the Opera House. Every one there executed immediately what it was his pleasure to point out, through a wish to save him trouble, in doing which they certainly saved themselves a great deal, as he had no occasion to harass them with

many rehearsals, which must unavoidably be the case where much time is lost by want of attention.

Le Picq was heard without raising his voice, owing to the great attention paid to him, and the perfect silence which prevailed when he spoke; but for this he could not have performed his heavy task at the Opera House, and have also given his valuable instruction to so many of the nobility.

Signor Gallini's\* remark, wherein he speaks of

\* Gallini first visited this country as an Opera-dancer, but was soon obliged to discontinue his exertions in that capacity from an injury he sustained while dancing—a circumstance too often attending this profession. He then confined himself to teaching, and met with great success—making some thousands yearly, for at that period ladies' schools, though not so numerous as at the present day, were very extensive, many of them containing from one to two hundred pupils: at Queen Square school, for example, there were nearly two hundred; private governesses were rare,

the great difference between the antient and modern dances, is very applicable to the present time :—

“ The antient dances were full of sublime simplicity. But that simplicity was far from excluding the delicate, the graceful, and even the brilliant. The moderns are so accustomed to those dances from which nature is banished, and in which false refinements are introduced in their place, that it will be difficult to recover from so perverted a taste.

and even the nobility were content to send their daughters to schools. Gallini had his full quota of these ; and was so indefatigable, that he neither allowed rest to himself, to his assistants, or to his horses ; four hours' sleep was his professed allowance. With such assiduity, and great parsimony, he very soon became rich—bought Hanover Square concert-rooms, and dwelt in one of the attics. At one time he had a large share in the Opera House ; but by this concern he lost considerable sums in law-suits, and was further a sufferer by the purchase of church lands in France at the Revolution. These losses it was said, hastened his death.

“ The Greeks, who were so famous for this art, as indeed for most others, (which is no wonder, since all the arts have so acknowledged an affinity with each other) studied especially grace and dignity in the execution of their dances. The levity of capering, that nimbleness of the legs which we have so much admired, held no rank in their estimation. The great beauty of movements or steps, is for every one of them to be distinct. The Greeks were right in their preference of the sublime or serious style, which having so much less quickness or rapidity of execution than the comic dance, admits of more attention to expressiveness in every motion, gesture, attitude, or step.

“ In dancing, the attitudes, gestures, and motions derive also their principles from nature, whether they characterize joy, rage, or grief, in the bodily expression respectively appropriated to

the different affections of the soul. It is a consideration like this which clearly proves the mistake of those who imagine the art of dancing to be solely confined to the legs, or even the arms, whereas the expression of it should be diffused through the whole body."

To an actor, the minuet is of the most essential service. It gives him an air of presenting himself that is sure to prepossess an audience in his favour. On this head, the above writer says, "Persons of every size or shape are susceptible of grace and improvement from the minuet. The shoulders are drawn back, as it were, to retreat from sight, or, as the French express it, *bien effacées*, the knees turning well outwards with a free play; the air, the shape, noble and unconstrained, the turns and movements easy: in short, to an actor, in all characters, it gives a graceful mien and presence. But in serious characters especially it suggests that striking portliness,



that majestic tread of the stage, by which some actors from their very first appearance so happily dispose the public to a favourable reception ; an influence of the first importance, which a good actor will hardly despise." Whilst an actor, indeed, is in the exercise of his profession, he should, on no account, discontinue the practice of the minuet. Many would be much benefited in their appearance were they to attend to this advice ; and they would, at all events, have the satisfaction of knowing that they followed the example of a Kemble, a King, a Palmer, a Smith, a Dodd, and the best actors of former days.\* Our vocal performers especially might profit by this hint, not excepting the ladies, whose timid bend, or head hung down on one side, is not so interesting and pretty as they imagine. " There is not an axiom more

\* To these distinguished actors, the author's father gave instructions, even up to their retirement from the stage.

true than that the graces are incompatible with affectation."

Those who are anxious to make an elegant appearance, must not object to consult a looking-glass. A mirror is to them what reflection is to a thinking person; it serves to make them acquainted with their defects, and how to correct them. To walk up to a glass and make obeisance—or walking past it and bowing, as if noticing a person *en passant*, would prove a most beneficial practice. Demosthenes, the Athenian orator, used to recite his speeches before a looking-glass, to form his action.

If you dance before a glass, you will acquire a true knowledge of your appearance—the glass will not flatter. If you are in false attitude, your arms ungraceful, or your head not corresponding, and a variety of important requisites which constitute a graceful dancer not duly observed, the thing will

be at once detected ; whereas, a partial friend looking on, might neglect to point out most material defects. Few might be found equally candid as the *maitre de dance*, who had the honour to instruct the late Lord Sandwich during his sojourn at Paris. It has been said of his lordship, that there hung about him through life an unconquerable awkwardness and slovenliness of gait and gesture, completely at variance with his birth and rank. The late Mr. Cradock, in his very entertaining memoirs, also describes his lordship to have illustrated this circumstance by an anecdote, which he most ingeniously related of himself.

Whilst a resident at Paris, being duly intent upon a little improvement in matters of personal grace, he had recourse to a *maitre de dance*, whom he described to have been a very civil and obliging person; and of whom, when quitting Paris, he

inquired if he could serve him in London? to which the grateful Frenchman, making his best bow, replied that "he had only to entreat of his lordship never to tell any one of whom he learned to dance."

One of the leading absurdities which has now, for some years, prevailed amongst the English *haut ton*, is an avidity for crowded rooms. It is nothing short of this positive inconvenience that will satisfy our genuine fashionables. No one could cavil at the ambition to convene five or six hundred persons at a time, if the space allotted to their reception were but sufficiently capacious to afford the free exercise of limbs and lungs. But the whimsical fact at which posterity will marvel, and reasonably complain of so large a draught upon their credulity, is, that a few faintings, more or less, as recorded in a fashionable journal on the following morning, were to be con-

sidered a faithful thermometer of the comparative state of atmosphere on the foregoing night at the Countess of ——'s and at my Lady ——'s routs; and thus afforded a pretty certain criterion as to which of the noble hostesses could lay claim to the preponderating hundred or two—such circumstance and such record thereof, having, it is well known, formed the triumph or vexation of the two contending fashionables of the nineteenth century.

In assemblies such as these, consisting for the most part of our nobility, we reasonably look for the most perfect models of all that is graceful, elegant, and dignified in dress, figure, gesture, &c., but in however refined a degree these tokens of distinguished rank might be possessed, it is plain, that under such circumstances, they could not be displayed. For even if there be no attempt at dancing, nor any thing aimed at beyond the

simple promenade, yet even this is not to be attained in the midst of a *mob*, however well dressed. The utmost that can be accomplished, is a squeeze out of one room into another! Can any state of things be more at variance with the dignity—with the decorum—of rank and birth?

The judicious actor carefully avoids too near an approach to others on the stage, that his person may not appear diminished, or his action be injured. The judicious dancer should be no less attentive to the maintaining a proper space consistent with the advantageous display of person and carriage; but as long as this unfortunate mania for crowded rooms shall continue to prevail amongst the higher orders, it will be in vain to expect improvement in the art of dancing.

One of the fair belles of fashion told the author one morning, that she had, on the foregoing

night, at the Duke of D——re's ball, lost her partner during the quadrille in the figure of L'Été, by mistaking, in consequence of the crowd, the exact bearing of his situation in the dance during the movement of the cavaliers, nor recovered sight of him till the line was opened for them to return to their places. This was, perhaps, a blameless accident as regarded the gentleman himself. It hence appears, however, that one of the evils obviously arising from the attempt to introduce dancing in such cases, consists in the inattention and slovenliness which are thereby encouraged ; for neither can good dancing be then appreciated, nor bad properly detected.

## CHAPTER III.

THE balls at Almack's are scarcely less crowded than the private parties and routs of our nobility. From want of space, the best dancers in the assembly have frequently to sustain the vexation of a sudden interruption ; at once putting an end to that genuine enjoyment of this delightful pastime, which arises from conscious excellence, and which communicates itself, in a great measure, to those who have the good fortune to be spectators of the ease, freedom, and elegance of their movements.

Whether it be from the inattention or the



*mal-adroitness* of the gentlemen of the same or neighbouring party, the interruption is altogether fatal ; there is no more dancing, and it is with difficulty they can even walk to their places. These most graceful dancers — and *one* who, even amid so much elegance, still stands distinguished\* — also forbear mingling in the rapid, rambling, romping waltz, which is completely at

\* “ Oh ! may you walk as you advance,  
Smooth and erect as now you dance ;  
May you on each important stage,  
From blooming youth to hoary ago,  
Assert your claim to Merit’s prize,  
And as at present, charm our eyes ;  
Observant of decorum’s laws ;  
And moving with the same applause,  
May you through life’s perplexing maze,  
Direct your steps with equal praise ;  
Its intricate meanders trace,  
With regularity and grace ;  
From the true figure never swerve,  
And time in every step observe ;

variances with all grace ; and are, therefore, independent of the frequent disappointment arising from the immediate causes above described, decidedly shut out from half the evening's dancing, a waltz being introduced after every quadrille.

The waltz, when well danced to a gentle measure, is one of the most graceful of dances—as interesting, or nearly so, as the Allemande dance ; but the fashionable scamper that has now usurped the name, is neither Waltz, Sautuse, Polonaise, nor any thing that can be legitimately styled a dance. It is nothing in short, but an outright romp—as destitute of figure or variety as the motion of a horse in a mill.

Give ear to harmony and reason,  
Nor make one motion out of season !  
Thus will life's current smoothly flow,  
And pour forth every bliss below ;  
Till Nature's failing ebb shall bring  
Death with his dart—but not his sting !”

Many are of the same opinion as the late Duke of Norfolk regarding this dance ; it has also been very well described by a discriminating authoress of birth and rank.\*

We would humbly suggest an alternative in the mode of conducting this dance in favour of those ladies that dance so little at this assembly ;—it is simply this :—let the music of the waltz be played one half of the time (say twice through) in slow measure, and then as rapidly as it is now played ; by which means, those who really know how to waltz, would be induced to join in this graceful dance, and on the time quickening, would readily resign their places to those who choose to be giddy themselves, and are content to be the cause of giddiness in others.

The wondrous paucity of variety in the style of dance, which even in this model of all assemblies

\* Lady C. B.

makes up the sum total of the evening's amusement, viz. Pantaloon, L'Eté, &c., Pantaloon, L'Eté, &c., repeated, bespeaks an indifference on the subject, confirmatory of the author's remark on the palpable retrograde movement of the dancing art ! So little cared about, indeed, seems to be the dance itself, that the parties appear only to regard it as a convenient vehicle through which to enjoy a snug *tête à tête*, secure from observation by the clamour of the music, &c. As *dancing*, however, is the professed object of the assembly, and as this unvarying routine is, in that point of view, an undoubted evil, the author feels impelled to suggest *a variety*, and will venture to claim the thanks of the fair and noble members for so doing, viz. the *Grecian Quadrille* ! Its merits are not altogether unknown, and he trusts ere long to see it in general use. It possesses a decided superiority in graceful movements over

many dances, having also a very pleasing combination of steps; and as it is for ladies only, and those uniformly dressed, it has the same interesting effect which is produced by the Shawl Quadrille, as danced at Paris in the ballet of *Cendrillon*, but has not its difficulties.

Who then is there in this distinguished—or in any other assembly, that would not be well content to turn occasionally from the tiresome routine of quadrille, waltz, ditto, ditto, ditto, ditto—to this very pleasing variety? While speaking of the uniformity of dress in this dance, it is to be observed that there appears occasionally at this assembly—no doubt by previous concert—a number of young ladies in a *costume* of their own, with the object apparently of forming a distinct set in the dance—a very interesting picture of symmetry and conformity being thus presented to the eye of the spectator. But even here the bad taste of some

members frequently leads them to obtrude themselves into a set, thus formed, who are very differently dressed, which of course not only discomposes the set, but destroys the otherwise unique appearance.

No gentleman of good taste would object to seeing the ladies dance the Grecian Quadrille by themselves for a few minutes, or be so selfish as to pine at being left out. But this need not be; if gentlemen would acquire the art of dancing, they might join in this dance with the ladies; but, they would spoil the effect unless *they* were also dressed alike; and how preferable would be light dresses to black coats, trowsers, and stockings; how deplorably, for such occasions, lugubrious! The author feels persuaded he shall, by this last valuable suggestion, have secured to himself not less the thanks of the male portion of this fashionable meridian, especially of the

military members, than he trusts he has previously done those of the ladies, by introducing to their acquaintance this very graceful dance.

It is remarked in a former passage, that in the better days of the dancing art, a lady or gentleman of rank was, for the most part, distinguished by the gait and movement alone. They were looked up to as models by other classes, and general society thence derived much refinement and elegance, which ultimately are not merely confined to person. These distinctive marks, it was also before noticed, sensibly declined when, alas ! the minuet—that great stimulant to the attainment of graceful movement, was abandoned by the higher orders !

In the present day, notwithstanding (as an author has lately observed) “ there is a *freemasonry* about rank and real fashion that is at once intelligible to every member of the same

society," the uncertainty arising from the partial loss of the aforesaid distinctive marks is increased by circumstances that occasionally present themselves in this splendid assembly, even to incredulity! For example—suppose the case—or, we will rather say, as there is no supposition about it—consider the fact—of a quadrille-~~set~~ completely made up; a gentleman then approaches with his partner, and quietly insinuates the lady (his partner) and himself before another lady and gentleman, already forming part of the said set, and placed ready to begin to dance!

It is a most correct as well as general observation—nor is it less gratifying than correct—and the author is able to add his humble testimony to the fact in a thousand instances—that the higher the grade in the scale of society, the more marked the genuine politeness and urbanity which adorn



it. If, therefore, the possibility be admitted that, in such a case as the one above described, the lady and gentleman advancing to displace those already in occupation *can* hold a high rank, it will also be admitted, as the author ventures to presume, that any thing short of the talismanic demonstration or *masonic sign*, to speak in the language of the holy brotherhood, could hardly convince a common observer of such a fact.

At as early a point of this volume as the Preface, it is cautiously hinted that, even as the mountain streams pervade every district of the plain below, so do the manners, usages, &c. of the higher orders necessarily find their way through the various ranks of society below them. For as the "lights" held out by the former may be greatly beneficial to the latter, who will assuredly take them for guides; so, if the higher

deviate from propriety and become "false lights," they will as certainly prove false guides, and be productive of mischief.

The author conceives it of no small importance to reiterate, just now, this caution; for should any aspirant to *haut ton* in the east, with so alluring a precedent in his eye as a *Scena* at *Almack's*, venture upon a similar experiment at the *London*, or *City of London*, &c., the unlucky essayist would most infallibly be either called out or kicked out—therefore—ye exalted ones—

"O ponder well! be not severe,  
So save a poor cit's life."

The whimsical triumph of one gay leader of fashion over another, in the record of an extra hundred or two to encumber their *salles*, however *grandes*, has already been adverted to in the matter of *private* assemblies. But as in that splendid emporium of fashion which has been

especially dwelt upon, and which though rigorously *select* may still be called *public*, in contradistinction to the former—numbers cannot here gratify individual ambition, it is reasonable to conclude that there exists in this assembly no positive *penchant* for squeezing and jostling, and that the inconvenience is submitted to for no other reason than that our western metropolis affords no saloon sufficiently spacious to accommodate an assembly of such extent. This view of the subject induced the author, in conjunction with Mr. J. Green, some short time since, to devise a building upon a scale of magnificence and splendour befitting an assemblage of the nobility of the empire, and at the same time embracing many other objects of a subsidiary nature, as masquerades, *ridottos*, public promenades, musical festivals, &c. &c. The design has been for the present abandoned, solely for the want of a

piece of ground suitably situated for the erection of the projected building.

The Regent's Park was first suggested, but many of the nobility (to whom the author is happy in the present opportunity of acknowledging his obligations for their kindness and attention) were of opinion that a situation about St. James's, and at a conveniently short distance from the houses of parliament and the subscription houses, was indispensable. Every inquiry and every effort were accordingly made to obtain a spot answering this description, but unfortunately, for that time, without success. Taking, however, into account the progress that was made in the plan, and the high encouragement given—that a model was formed, and the plan laid before his Majesty—a hope may still be indulged that this abandonment is but temporary, and that at no remote period the attain-

ment of so acknowledged a desideratum in the world of rank and fashion may be accomplished.

Whenever the favourable crisis may arrive for a renewed effort towards this great work—a work which, it is presumed, will form one of the chief ornaments of the British empire, having had no parallel since the amphitheatres of Roman glory—the author will anxiously avail himself of many valuable suggestions already conveyed to him, by several of the nobility who contemplated the project with most favourable regard, and to whom he feels impelled again to avow his sincere sense of their obliging communications.

In the annals of fashion, connected with the art of dancing, may be noticed as an epoch, the first arrival, in this country, of the two Vestris'—father and son. Their appearance at the Opera House produced a considerable sensation, and an extraordinary occasion for the display of their

powers was soon after afforded by a ridotto, conducted upon a very rare and splendid scale of magnificence. Although the theatre was crowded, the selectness of the company was secured by the rate of admission, the tickets being charged three guineas each! an enormous price even *at that day*, and since which time the rate of public entertainments has been for the most part doubled!

The company were dressed *a la carnival*; many new dances were composed for the occasion, and chiefly performed by the above distinguished pair, who, as will be supposed, formed the leading feature of the entertainment. The senior on this night introduced a minuet which he entitled, *the Devonshire Minuet*, in compliment to the celebrated Duchess of Devonshire, at that time the most distinguished star in our fashionable hemisphere, and his declared pa-

troness. Of this minuet, though very plain and simple, he made most profitable account by receiving ten guineas from every professor who desired to acquire it, which was almost universally the case from the fashionable and extensive repute of the dance. The author's father was amongst the company on the above occasion, and attended Vestris the next morning in order to obtain the earliest professional advantage of his minuet, and be the first to introduce it in his various schools, where it was then the usage to pay extra for all that was new.

The Vestris', senior and junior, were certainly great men in their way ; but if any credence be due to the following pair of current anecdotes, both father and son had a much deeper impression of their own importance, than was felt by the rest of the world. At the ridotto above mentioned, where, as has been stated, was

present the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, then in the full zenith of all her brilliance and attraction, the younger Vestris remarked to a bystander, in testimony of his profound admiration of her charms, that of all men living, he would choose to be the Duke of Devonshire, were he not Vestris !

On another occasion, the elder Vestris is said to have remarked, " How glorious was that epoch (the early part of his own career) which could boast the simultaneous existence of the three greatest men that history had known—Frederick of Prussia, Voltaire, and Vestris !"

On the first arrival of Vestris, *l'ainé*, in London, " pleasure," observes Dr. Burney, " was sublimed into ecstasy. In the year 1781, Pacchierotti had been heard so frequently, that his singing was no impediment to conversation, or even to animated narrative and debate. But



while the elder Vestris was on the stage, if, during a *pas seul*, any of his admirers forgot themselves so much as to applaud him with their hands, there was an instant check put to his rapture by a choral hu-sh ! for these lovers of music, who talked loudest when Pacchierotti was singing a pathetic air, were now thrown into agonies of displeasure, lest the graceful movements *du dieu de la danse*, or the attention of his votaries, should be disturbed by audible approbation.

“ Since that time, the most mute and respectful attention has been given to the manly grace of Le Picq, and light fantastic toe of the younger Vestris—to the Rossis, the Theodores, the Coulons, and the Hilligsbergs, while the singers have been disturbed, not by the violence of applause, but the clamour of inattention.”

Since the days of Le Picq, to the period

when Deshayes quitted our Opera stage, the dancing was thought to bear the bell, in point of pre-eminence, over the singing department. But a change since then has taken place; the dancing has declined, and the singing has improved: and if Dr. Burney were alive now, he would be satisfied to his heart's content with the attention and respect most deservedly given to the music, and the disregard almost as deservedly given to the dancing, such as now prevails.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE great advantage of the art of dancing to mankind, is amply demonstrated by the eulogy and recommendation bestowed on it in all ages by the most distinguished philosophers and physicians. The following extracts from *Locke on Education*, will no doubt be interesting and acceptable.

“ Nothing appears to me to give children so much becoming confidence and behaviour, and to raise them to the conversation of those above

their age, as dancing. I think they should be taught to dance as soon as they are capable of learning it; for, though this consists only in outward gracefulness of motion, yet, I know not how, it gives children many thoughts and carriage more than any thing. . . . .

Dancing is that which gives graceful motions through all our lives. But you must be sure to have a good master, that knows and can teach what is graceful and becoming, and what gives freedom and easiness to all the motions of the body. One that teaches not this, is worse than none at all—natural awkwardness being much better than apish affected postures.”

The Chevalier de Ramsay, in his plan of education for a young prince, has the following passage :—

“ To the study of poetry, should be joined that

of the three arts of imitation. The antients represented the passions by jests, colours, and sounds."

Xenophon tells us of some wonderful effects of the Grecian dances; and how they moved and expressed the passions. "We have lost now the perfection of that art: all that remains is only what is necessary to give a handsome action and airs to a young gentleman. This ought not to be neglected, because upon the external figure and appearance depends often the regard we have to the internal qualities of the mind. A graceful behaviour commands the attention of a whole assembly."

Quintilian has recommended the acquirement of this accomplishment in early years, when the limbs are most pliable, as necessary to the formation of the gestures of the orator, observing that where the action is unbecoming, the sentiment

loses its force and effect. This branch of education enables a gentleman to present himself with a good grace, the value of which will be readily admitted ; a favourable prepossession at the first sight being frequently of the highest advantage.

The practice of this art will be interesting to the ladies, not only as a mere diversion, or for the more material improvement of their deportment, but also as being highly serviceable to their health, and to what they cannot be indifferent about, their beauty.

Beauty was no where more flourishing than among those nations who encouraged and cultivated exercise, especially in the fair sex. The various provinces and governments in Greece all agreed in making exercise a point of female education. The Spartans carried this perhaps to an excess ; but it has been universally allowed, that the Spartan women owed to it that beauty

in which they excelled the rest of the Grecian women, who were themselves held in that point preferable to the rest of the world. Helen was a Spartan !

The great benefit resulting from the introduction of Gymnastic Exercises, carried on *judiciously*, will no doubt be the means of very materially improving the form of the youth of the present day, and the beneficial results will be experienced by the future generation. . But this violent exercise is only suitable to the *male sex* : the red muscular arms and robust manly appearance to which the exercise of the triangle is so well adapted, not being considered feminine beauties.\* The exercise hereafter mentioned,

\* The Calisthenic exercise, though lately brought forward with a *title*, as something new, is of very ancient date ; its discontinuance at ladies' schools of late years was in consequence of accidents happening to the shoulders by using the stick, &c.

preparatory to taking lessons in dancing, will be found to produce all the necessary exertion of the muscles, and to be more suitable to the slender form of the female.

It has been remarked, that the practice of dancing has, in a great degree, warded off the feebleness of old age. There have been many instances of public dancers who have exercised their profession to a very advanced age. "Dupré danced at Paris, when near sixty, with all the agility and sprightliness of youth ; and with such powers of pleasing, as if the graces *in him* had braved superannuation." And it has been observed, that professors of this art not only live to a great age, but enjoy good health to the last.

"Females, whose sphere is more confined than that of men, find at once in the practice of this art, exercise and an opportunity of display.



ing their native graces. Where only gentle exercise is desirable, the minuet offers its services with the greatest effect; and when elegantly danced, affords the greatest pleasure to the spectators, whether in private or public assemblies, or on the stage." Though this dance has been laid aside of late years in public (except occasionally on a benefit night at the Opera), yet it has never been neglected by those masters who understood its value, as it may be said to comprise almost every graceful movement in dancing.

"The minuet derives its merit from the most agreeable steps in nature, well combined by art. In this, as in many other instances of imitative skill, Art may essentially assist Nature, and place her in the most advantageous point of view. A greater degree of excellence in the performance of the minuet, has frequently given to an in-

different figure, at least, a temporary advantage over one much superior; sometimes, perhaps, the impression may have been more permanent.

“The being well versed in this dance, especially contributes to form the gait and address. It has a sensible influence in polishing and fashioning the air and deportment on all occasions. It helps to wear off any thing of clownishness in the carriage of the person, and breathes itself even into the most indifferent actions, by promoting a gentle and agreeable manner of performing them. In short, all the graces that characterize a good execution of the minuet, will insensibly influence every part of the person, and communicate a certain freedom and agreeableness of motion, easier to be conceived than defined. The most awkward person cannot help being improved by learning this dance.” But it has been neglected of late years, particularly by the gentlemen; con-

sequently, when a ball in the higher circle is to be opened by a particular lady with a minuet, a *foreigner* must be applied to for having the honour of dancing with her !

The author has often regretted, on these occasions, that our court balls should no longer be distinguished by the elegant minuets which were equal, if not superior, to any seen at foreign courts.\* It is desirable (if it were only for the above reason, and to keep pace with others) that the English gentlemen should know how to dance. They should not be deterred from learn-

\* It may be suspected that the author is an Englishman, he "pleads guilty;" but though not born in the *dancing nation*, he has been sufficiently long in France, when a youth, to imbibe a little of its national enthusiasm, and to obtain the education in his art, there to be met with. He has also the satisfaction of acknowledging as his masters, the most celebrated of their day, Le Picq and Gardel ; and scruples not to claim a tolerable knowledge of his profession from these advantages.

ing this accomplishment when arrived at manhood, because some have ridiculed the idea of "grown gentlemen learning to dance." If an authority was wanted, we could name several :—Socrates learnt the art of dancing when advanced in years ; Cato practised dancing at the age of sixty. "And professors of this art were held in such high estimation by the Romans, that in a time of scarcity, on the public distribution of corn and wine being suspended, *they* were expressly excepted."

Who can be insensible of the importance, both to health and grace, of limbs well formed and duly-fulfilling all their functions ; of ease and freedom of carriage and strength of muscular action :—the general figure thus approaching those models of perfection in classical sculpture which have for ages past been the admiration of

the world and the ambition of our master artists to imitate?

Every master who professes to teach grace and elegance of position in the human frame, should understand the principles of drawing and sculpture, at least as far as regards anatomy, sufficiently to enable him to know when the figure is perfectly correct. This knowledge is no less necessary to him than to the sculptor. A master possessed of a proper degree of enthusiasm, and who enters into the spirit of his art, will (as well as the sculptor) find his greatest pleasure in rendering the figure perfect; and thus will he raise his profession to its proper standard. Speaking of enthusiasm in a master, brings to mind an anecdote of the noted M. Marcel, so much extolled by his pupil Gallini, which exhibits this feeling in what may be, perhaps, considered an *ultra*

forcible point of view, inasmuch as it appears to have possessed the ascendant in his mind over the still more desirable feeling of gratitude.

A lady who had been a pupil of this distinguished professor, and remained subsequently his steady and zealous friend, succeeded in obtaining for him from the government a pension for life. In her great joy at having such a boon to put into his possession, she advanced to him—the certificate in her hand—with a hurried and anxious step; when M. Marcel, shocked at the style of presentation, struck the paper out of her hand, demanding if she had forgotten his instructions? The lady immediately picked it up, and presented it with due form and grace; on which the accomplished Marcel, the enthusiastic professor of his art, respectfully kissed her hand, and with a profound bow exclaimed, “Now I know my own pupil!” But to return.

Another requisite in a teacher is *method*. Teaching and dancing are two distinct things. The best dancers are not *necessarily* the best teachers ; for the continual practice required of the *dancer* takes up too much of his time to allow leisure to study the best means to communicate his knowledge to others. Long experience and study can alone produce *method*, which is the *sine quâ non* in teaching. Besides, a master should keep in mind that he is more useful to his pupils when he is a *maître de grace*, than when he is only a *maître de danse*.

## CHAPTER V.

THOUGH it may not be in the power of a master to make a pupil graceful where Nature has been unfavourable, yet he can always render her less awkward, particularly if he be assisted by those under whose care pupils are placed, added to their own efforts. Without these aids it is unreasonable to expect much beneficial result from the exertions of even the most skilful master ; nor can he be held responsible for the non-effect of his most anxious endeavours. This assistance mainly con-



sists in the constant presence of some superior during the time the pupil receives her lesson, and a careful observation of all that is said and done by the master, especially every direction given by him for practice in his absence, in order that these directions may be duly attended to in the interval between one lesson and another.

Be it understood that this minute observation on the part of the governess is quite incompatible with the employment of a book or work-box ! These, or some such occupation, are generally resorted to by these ladies on the arrival of a master, in order to fill up the dull *vacuum* of the lesson.

These occupations, indeed, so much militating against the proper attention to the instruction given by the master, might well warrant an offended feeling on his part, as seeming to indicate that her presence was judged necessary only to

secure his gentlemanly demeanour towards the pupil.

These observations, in most cases, will also equally apply to other masters as well as to dancing-masters. If a parent be not satisfied as to the character of a master whom she deliberately introduces into her family, she pronounces a censure on herself for having departed from one of the most sacred duties.

It may be true that there are many clever masters in this and other professions whose character may not be wholly free from taint; yet there are also many equally, or perhaps more clever, of whom this *can* be truly said. At all events, it must be allowed that this profession especially insures, at least, the *manners* of a gentleman.

Some parents content themselves, during the

early stages of practice, with masters whose services may be obtained at a cheaper rate, or with the instructions of a governess who enumerates *dancing* amongst her items of accomplishment, the better to ensure employment.\* This is gene-

\* It is to be regretted that the emoluments of this office are too often inadequate to the heavy responsibility, high talents, and expensive accomplishments, necessarily required in the present style of domestic education. It has been observed, that to ensure perfection in art as a teacher, it is necessary that the drawing-master, music-master, dancing-master, language-master, &c. &c. should limit themselves to their own particular province of instruction. Were *they* to profess to teach all, they would be set down for quacks, and rejected as mere pretenders. Yet, from a private governess, all this union of the greatest variety of talent is expected ! Is not this expecting from human nature more than human nature can perform ? “ *Rara avis in terris.* ”

In a book on education (commonly ascribed to Mrs. Broadhurst, of Bath,) is the following anecdote :—An anxious mother, who could not readily find one of these treasures in question, wrote to her brother to the following effect :—

rally done on the supposition, that it is scarcely worth while to bestow on a *mere child* the ex-

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I am in great distress for want of a governess for my daughters. As you go so much into the world, it may be in your power to assist me. As we are out of the reach of masters, I require a person who is perfect mistress of music, drawing, dancing, geography, writing, arithmetic, and French. A knowledge of Italian would be a great recommendation. Other essentials it is almost unnecessary to mention, for of course she must be a gentlewoman, well read, well principled, and very fond of children, and not objecting to retirement, for we see very little company, and Mr. —— and myself like to have our evenings to ourselves. I wish her to be about twenty-five.

To this her brother replied as follows:—

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have received your letter, and should be very glad to render you any assistance in my power. In the present case, however, I cannot give you any hopes of being serviceable to you. For many years I have been looking out for exactly such a woman as you describe, hitherto wholly

pense of a good master ! This is ~~delusive~~ economy. The mischief thus frequently committed, if attempted to be remedied by a late appeal to a good master, requires his protracted attendance, having so much to *undo* before proper instruction can be begun. It would be found much better, under such circumstances, where economy is an object, to adopt the preparatory exercise hereafter described.

It frequently occurs in schools, where the establishment is in the hands of two or three sisters conjointly, that after gathering a little instruction, gratis, from the several masters at first employed, they dismiss these same masters, and declare themselves at once competent to the several

in vain. I shall continue my search ; but should I be so fortunate as to succeed, I must frankly tell you that I shall not make the lady *your governess*, but my own wife.

I am, dear Sister, yours affectionately.

branches of tuition. Parents are readily persuaded, by the difference of a few pounds in their favour, that the scheme possesses many advantages! This also is delusive economy. The observations made on the preceding case will equally apply here, in addition to which the truth of the following remark must be admitted—that it is impossible for any one, particularly those whose attention must be necessarily directed to various branches of education, by means of a few accidental lessons and passing observations, to obtain the necessary knowledge of any branch of learning so as to communicate it properly to others, as possessed by the master, who has dedicated the undivided attention of his whole life to his own particular profession.

Another error into which parents not unfrequently fall, is the giving a few, very few, lessons to their children from some fashionable and expensive master, merely for the vain boast of

having employed such master ! But whatever may be the advantage gained by these few lessons, it is lost by their being discontinued before sufficient time has been allowed to acquire the knowledge of the particular style of the master.

Parents frequently find it necessary to employ masters for their children after they have left school, notwithstanding much expense has been incurred for many years in their teaching. This is not because inferior masters have taught at the school, the same being frequently employed to attend them subsequently, but because their injunctions, regarding carriage and deportment, have not been duly enforced in their absence. Where the heads of schools sedulously assist the efforts of the master, with regard to the carriage and deportment of the pupils, they never fail to reap advantage, as nothing proves a stronger letter of recommendation to a school

than the elegant manners and graceful deportment of the pupils.

As the dancing art to a considerable extent can only be exercised in parties, independent of the desirable emulation thence so naturally arising, it follows, that schools herein possess in themselves a constant advantage. The author, therefore, strongly recommends that where a private family is not sufficiently numerous to form in itself an ample party, two or three families should unite, thus at once obtaining the advantage of a school without its objections. On these occasions, it would be advisable that parents should not be always present during their children's lesson ; the most perfect silence should be preserved, which is too much to expect of two or three parents met together, for even a whisper takes off the pupil's attention. The master does not find himself in their presence so free to re-



mark on the pupil's faults, as it would probably distress their feelings to do so. A constant presence is also less likely to afford parents the power to judge of the pupils' improvement than an occasional visit or so.

If it were not disadvantageous to the pupil, a master most assuredly would prefer the parent to be present, as his assiduity and exertions would then be duly appreciated, even if the pupil did not profit by them. The presence, however, of some superior is always most desirable, not only to ensure the attention of the pupils, but also to bear witness to his efforts to improve them.

This occasional visit of parents and friends would be greatly beneficial to the pupils, as it would tend gradually to prepare them for the assembly, where they must at length make their appearance, and which, without this advantage, would assuredly be attended with some confusion and awk-

wardness. At schools these same observances are recommended, and for the same reasons.

Although a child, under the regular instruction of a master, must wait to attain a certain power of action, yet the affair of *preparation* for the future labour of the master can scarcely be set about too soon, seeing that no less important consideration is involved than the due formation and *set* of the limbs for ever after.

The first scene, therefore, of these necessary preparations will naturally be the *nursery*, for if at that early period any awkward turn or action of the limbs be allowed to become established, not all the future efforts of the master may be able entirely to eradicate it !

A reasonable inducement to this early attention, in the way of preparation, may be found in the considerable saving of expense that must arise from the master finding his pupil at once on her

introduction to him qualified to receive his instructions, and that he is not obliged, as too frequently occurs, to devote all his early lessons to the removal, if possible, of bad habits.

In the absence of a pair of French partition stocks, in which to sink and rise, a heavy dining-table, with a flap down, and placed near enough to the wall just to admit the child between, is a very good substitute.

It is hardly necessary to say that, in a school, a pair of these stocks may be regarded as most desirable, if not indispensable ; and not less desirable is the *slanting-board*, one of the most importantly useful articles for children ever devised, if properly employed. The slanting-board, here adverted to, has a hollow to receive the back part of the head with a strap to come over, which affords a little recess for the chin. Those boards that have not the hollow in them, but have a

loose appendage to place occasionally *on* the board, which raises the head out of its proper place, are worse than useless. This appendage for the head ought to be let *into* the board, that the head may not be held forward. This board is truly desirable, if, as we repeat, it be properly employed. The following simple direction is sufficient, and should be carefully observed. The board should be nearly level when the child is laid on it; and when the head is placed in the hollow, and the strap brought round the chin and fastened, the end of the board should be raised a little, and very gently, so that the weight of the body should only be very slightly felt by the head. Thus it should remain for a week or two, and then be raised a little higher for the next fortnight. The process should be very slow, each succeeding elevation being very trifling, and not at shorter periods than from one fortnight to

another. By this deliberate advance, the spine will in time acquire strength to bear the weight of the body suspended by the chin and back part of the head.

As many months should elapse before the board should be raised to its full height, it is indeed desirable that the board maker should increase the number, and diminish the distance of the grades of elevation, for they are much too wide, as made at present, for the sufficiently gradual strengthening of the spine.

For very young children, the author would rather recommend that only a table be employed, as the restlessness, natural to children under confinement, might be attended with danger, when the weight of the body is suspended by the neck, and perhaps it might inflict an injury for life. Let them, therefore, be laid flat on a table, their heels placed together, their feet

turned out, their knees quite straight, their toes pointed down, stretched at full length. Make marks at the extremities, head and feet, and other marks an inch above the head, and below the feet, at which they may in time, by constant stretching each way, endeavour to arrive. They must be laid perfectly flat on their backs, but may turn their face sideways as much as they can, provided the shoulders be not disturbed, but are kept down flat on the board.

To turn once again to the slanting-board. It is now a salutary custom in some schools, for each lady alternately to pursue her studies where a book only is required, while lying on the board, for some of these boards are made to accommodate a book. The more this plan is generalized the better; for if, during study, the body be so disposed, instead of on stools,

forms, &c., which much incline to lounging, the improvement of figure may be happily going on simultaneously with that of mind.\*

It is a melancholy consideration, how great is the number of young persons at this day, whose parents having neglected, during their infancy and childhood, to have recourse to these salutary aids, still think it expedient to appeal to them, or are enjoined to do so by their medical adviser at a more mature growth, to the severe penalty of the unfortunate object of this infliction, who may after all never derive the hoped for rectification of an imperfect figure from the most earnest

\* In schools where the young ladies have each their desk to write or draw at, and rather more elevated than in common, the author has remarked, that there is not that inveterate stoop so generally to be found where they write or draw on a low flat table, which is decidedly bad for the carriage, if not for the health.

efforts too late employed, and to the bitter grief of the parent, who has to add to the afflicting view of her child's cruel confinement, &c., the reflection, that she is herself responsible for all the suffering thus produced. In infancy, the figure may be moulded into any form, and trained even as a plant. A lady of refined taste attends to the culture of her own plants ;— are these more precious to her than her children ? And yet how frequently, from consigning these tender *human* plants to the care of servants, or to those who cannot feel with a mother's feelings, have such evils, and worse, resulted.

In a former part of this work, the author has represented, as one of the advantages of an early preparation for the subsequent attention of the teacher of dancing, even in the nursery, the great saving of expense, inasmuch as he is thus



empowēred to enter immediately upon the affair of dancing. With this advantage may be here contrasted the large expenditure, which, added to the heavy affliction above remarked upon, will pretty certainly be incurred by adverting to medical counsel, probably long continued, thus accumulating the sum of distress and vexation, the whole of which might have been so simply avoided.

If the author has presumed to glance with some strength of animadversion on the errors and negligences of parents, superiors of schools, and their various agents, in regard to children, he can only plead for excuse the importance of the subject, as involving the health and well-being of a large portion of the rising generation. This he thinks he has truly ventured to treat, as intimately connected with his own art. In this

view, he would confidently rely on obtaining a ready acquiescence in his plan from every parent of judgment and feeling, and from every superior of a school, whose conscientious sense of these sacred, and at the same time pleasing duties, is duly impressed on their minds.

## CHAPTER VI.

A SERIES OF PRACTICE FROM INFANCY ONWARDS,  
THROUGH CONTINUED GROWTH, FOR WELL  
FORMING AND SETTING THE LIMBS OF CHIL-  
DREN, THE ADVANTAGES OF WHICH TO HEALTH  
AND STRENGTH WILL BE ENJOYED TO THE  
LATEST PERIOD OF LIFE.

THE following pages are the result of long  
professional experience, and are expressly de-  
signed for the guidance of mothers and their  
assistants in the *personal* training of children.

They will be found to comprise useful observations, applicable to every age from infancy onwards, calculated to promote the healthful action of the limbs, to prevent defects of form, and to insure a graceful carriage of person—observations which are borne out by the opinions of the most respectable medical authorities. Much information is also conveyed tending to prepare the child for regular instruction in dancing, thus sparing future labour to the master, and expense to the parent. “Preserve all the etiquettes of life,” says an excellent author, “when alone and in your family, and they sit easily and gracefully upon you in public; while if you relax from their observance in your private hours, your manners appear when put on to sit awkwardly.”

Every person that aspires to gentility, should endeavour to acquire a graceful manner of walk-

ing, for seldom does the human figure appear to greater advantage than whilst walking or dancing. An easy, graceful movement of the limbs must prepossess every one in favour of those who have been fortunate enough to succeed in this desirable attainment. It cannot be doubted that, in many instances, a successful career through life has been greatly promoted, simply by this cause. When a young man is first introduced into public life, *external* qualifications are of the greatest importance to him, and seldom fail to procure him a most favourable reception in society, even amongst people of fashion and consequence. A favourable impression at first sight has been often known either to make or mar a young man's fortune in future life ; a graceful deportment and polite address can, indeed, do wonders for a man, but if not acquired in youth are subsequently of very difficult attain-

ment, and, if too long deferred, absolutely unattainable. Parents, therefore, evidently neglect one of the most essential duties when they do not attend to, and enforce this consideration on the minds of their children.

An able writer on the subject has remarked—  
“ With what complacence the masters of dancing survey their own art, and how high they lift it in the scale of things that are great and useful.”

This pretension is, however, no longer a problem when the success of the different workmen is considered. The effect produced on the body remains; while the influence gained over the mind is inconstant and evanescent. The air and elegance that have been imparted by the master accompany a man to the grave; but knowledge may be forgotten. Alcibiades often dishonoured the instruction of his great teacher, Socrates, but he never disgraced his dancing-master. The

females of Athens always saw him elegant and graceful; while the strenuous lovers of virtue frequently lamented his defects and errors.

It is the consciousness of not labouring in vain, and of the permanence of the effects which they have produced, that gives to the professors of the art of dancing satisfaction and confidence.

Children should never be carried constantly on one arm, as it most certainly tends to make them crooked; for a child naturally turns from the nurse to observe objects, and the turn being always to one side gives the body an inclination that way while growing; besides injuring the straightness of the back, one leg becomes contracted by the position it is constantly kept in, and one knee will turn more inward than the other: to which may be added another deformity, which is that of one shoulder growing

higher than the other. By inattention to these particulars, nurses frequently are the original cause of children being disfigured all their lives.

Great attention should also be paid to the manner of infants standing; the good or bad disposition of the body depends, in a great measure, upon the proper support from the legs. If one leg sustains a greater portion of weight than the other, one side of the waist will incline inwards, and, of course, the opposite shoulder will be the highest.

There is not a more disagreeable appearance in a person, walking or dancing, than being knock-kneed; and there is no complete cure for this evil in adults. A person thus formed may always be observed with his hips straight, and his thighs in contact with one another. The only improvement that can be made in this case, is,



to exercise the joints by sinking and rising with the knees as much turned outwards as possible. These motions, if any thing can, will relax the muscles that draw the thighs together, and may, in a great degree, obviate the misfortune. But this evil never need arise if due attention to the growth of a child be given in the earliest stages of infancy, when every bone and muscle is in a state of pliability and capable of receiving any direction which we choose to give them.

The best time for practice is soon after rising in the morning, when the joints are more loose in their articulation, than at any other time of the day. The greatest attention should then be paid to the proper regulation of the knees ; as on this depends the right position of the feet ; for which ever way the knees are turned, the feet will unavoidably follow the same direction, by reason of

the joints below the hips, which are so formed as to admit of little other motion than flexion and extension.

Children frequently receive material injury whilst in the nurse's arms, from the employment of very young and incompetent females. As parents are not always informed of the accidents which happen in their absence, it behoves them frequently to examine the person of their child.

Nurses frequently use the child to sustain its weight upon its chest, which will naturally induce the contraction of that part, with all its attendant evils.

Infants should be handled as little as possible, until they have strength enough to bear it. There is least deformity found in those countries where infants are allowed to roll about on the ground until their legs are able to bear their own weight.

The impatience of mothers to see their children stand and walk, and the still greater impatience of nurses to lessen their own fatigue, frequently occasions deformity in the legs.

It would appear preposterous to prescribe rules for the exercise of infants in arms ; nevertheless, it is much in the power of parents and nurses to dispose the limbs, when a few months old, to a graceful action. For instance :— during dressing and undressing, or at any other convenient opportunity, the child may be laid upon its back, the legs drawn down, the heels placed together, the feet inclined outward, with the toes pointed down. If the insteps and knees are gently rubbed while in this situation, and the soles of the feet occasionally put together with the knees much bent, and gently pressed down sideways, and thus held for a time, many advantages will arise, which will be better under-

stood hereafter as the reader proceeds. An intelligent nursery-maid will easily contrive to amuse a child, by making a play of these things. If the knees are often thus treated, as the child grows up, they will never incline inwards, and the feet will consequently be turned out.

As soon as a child begins to understand what is said, she may be allowed to practice the five positions in dancing, which are generally known to comprise all that is necessary for the elegant support of the body. These should be practised with the arms held out sideways, raised to the level of the shoulders, the head drawn back, with the face kept perpendicular.

Children should be instructed by their attendants, to practice walking thus. Place the feet in the first position. Advance the left foot until the leg is quite extended forward without touching the ground; remain in this position

sufficiently long to ascertain that the body is well balanced and perfectly upright ; shoulders down and well kept back, and the arms hanging easy. When all this is correct, then the foot to be put down, and the right foot advanced instantaneously, the foot pointed down, but not to touch the ground until the same length of time has elapsed for examining the whole figure as before.

When one foot passes the other, the knee must bend slightly, and the heels should pass quite close, as the separation of the feet in passing will give an awkward movement to the body.

By this little practice, frequently performed, and well attended to, infants will acquire a firm step.

At this time also, the practice of sinking and rising (already mentioned), but simply now

with the feet placed on a line marked on the floor, and the knees kept sideways, would effectually prevent the knees from growing inward. This exercise of the joints must, in time, very much relax the muscles which draw the knees together. To boys, in particular, this observance on the part of nursery-maids is of the greatest consequence, as the ill effects of their neglect are severely felt by many at this day. Though the present fashion of dress may, for a time, continue to disguise the deformity of inward turned knees, a time will arrive when the alteration of dress will discover their non Apollo-like appearance.

Many young men flatter themselves that their inward-turned knees will be ascribed to their riding on horseback ; but they only deceive themselves, for if it was the constant attendant on that exercise, all cavalry officers would be thus deformed, for so it certainly is to be knock-

kneed. But even admitting that the equestrian exercise in youth was detrimental to the proper turn of the knee, it only more strongly advocates the necessity of counteracting the evil by practising dancing, and those exercises that are known to place the knees in their right position.

To promote the graceful movements of the arms, the following practice is most particularly recommended :—

Place the child in the third position, with the arms hanging gracefully down, free from stiffness; in which position they will not be perfectly straight, but forming a gentle curve, the fore finger and thumb slightly touching. Advance the hands without contracting them, and raise the arms as slowly as possible, without the elbows being depressed, until they arrive on a level with the shoulders. Rest a little to observe that no other muscles are employed except those for

raising the arms, the finger and thumb touching slightly (this should be particularly observed). The whole figure erect, with the head drawn rather back. When all this is ascertained, raise the arms gradually until the fingers meet above the head as high as possible, forming a perfect oval—remain a short time in that situation. From this, extend the arms to the right and left, until they become horizontal in a line with the shoulder, the palm of the hand being turned upwards. The shoulders should be well kept down, the hands as far back as possible, depressing them a little for the purpose. Remain a few minutes in that situation.\* This exercise may

\* Twenty years back the author was highly complimented by an eminent physician, on his teaching this exercise to his daughter; who observed that he should advise some of his patients to adopt it, making use of the same arguments in its favour as P. H. Clias has in de-



at first occasion some little fatigue, which, after a short time, will not be felt.

For the practice of the movement of the head, stand in the third position, turning the face to the right as much as will bring the point of the chin even with the shoulder—then turn the face the other way in a similar manner, resting a while with the face so turned. To relieve any fatigue that may be felt during this and the preceding

scribing nearly the same exercise in his gymnastics, observing that, "As the action of the muscles of the arms is almost always simultaneous with those of the thorax, these exercises will naturally correct a number of disorders and deformities with which the chest is threatened ;—thus, obstinate coughs, recent asthma, tendency to a curved spine, and vicious formation of the thorax, &c. &c. would find in the great variety of movements for the arms, an advantage that would be vainly sought in the usual mode of treatment." One more benefit is to be derived from the above practice, which is, that it materially assists in presenting the hand gracefully in dancing.

practice, sinking and rising may be resorted to ; and it is to be observed, that if these practices are performed as soon as possible after rising in the morning, the more efficacious they will prove ; for the limbs, immediately after a night's rest, are more flexible than at any other period, as during sleep the joints are supplied with a fluid, acting as a natural oil to repair the waste of the day. The oftener these exercises are gone through, the sooner of course, the figure will be improved.

When a child can go steadily through the preceding exercises, the following may be recommended as the means of acquiring strength and dignity of deportment, perhaps superior to any other that could be devised. No practice is equal to it for giving a perfect command of the limbs :—

The five positions practiced with one foot *off* the ground. N. B. During the whole of this exercise, the left leg must be kept perfectly straight.

Stand in the first position with the arms quite extended sideways, the fore finger and thumb touching slightly. Elevate the right knee sideways, until the toe, which must be pointed straight down, is raised the length of the foot off the ground, keeping the knee as far back as possible. This is the *first* position off the ground. From this position, go to the *second* position, by completely straightening the right knee, with the toe pointed down as much as possible, still the length of the foot off the ground. Bring the right foot back again to the first position, and then place it before the left leg, which will form the *third* position off the

ground, still keeping the right knee pointed out sideways. From this go to the *fourth* position, which is by extending the right foot out before, until the knee is quite straight, and the toe very much pointed down and turned out, so that the heel shall be nearly as far advanced. After remaining a short time in this position, carry the foot round to the *second* position ; from this proceed on to the *fourth* position behind, by carrying the foot back as far as possible, retaining its position with the toe well pointed down and turned out : conclude the exercise by dropping the foot gently down behind into the *fifth* position on the ground.

All these positions must be performed without once putting down the right foot, and throughout the whole the toe must be well pointed down, and raised the length of the foot off the ground.

Neither the body, arms, nor head, should be perceived to move in the least during this practice, and on no account should the left knee be in the slightest degree bent. After going through this exercise with the right leg, repeat the same with the left. The slower all this is done, if quite steadily, the more meritorious.\*

Sinking and rising with the feet and knees well turned out, should be resorted to between the practice of one foot and the other ; for unless the feet and knees are quite turned out, the

\* A gentle and long inspiration during this practice is advantageous, "as it insures to the chest a considerable degree of dilatation and firmness. In dancing and singing, the advantage acquired by the practice of inspiration needs no comment. The retention of the breath prevents the blood from circulating with rapidity in the lungs, makes it flow into the members that are in movement, thus greatly increasing the strength of those parts."

practice of the five positions off the ground cannot be performed ; besides, the sinking and rising is a great relief to the fatigue of this practice.

## CHAPTER VII.

DURING the long professional career of the author, the preceding exercises have proved of essential service in accelerating the progress of his pupils in dancing, and he willingly accedes to the flattering instances of many patronesses, in thus committing his observations to the press. However, as this book may have the fate to fall into the hands of strangers, he solicits one indulgence, that it may not be indiscriminately classed amongst the numerous and volumi-

nous modern works on gymnastics, calisthenics, &c. &c.

In the system of practice here submitted to public attention, the author has had primarily in view, to establish its *general* utility and importance, as obviously tending to promote bodily strength, and to bring the muscular powers into full action. Its *particular* advantages to those whom it is intended shall subsequently become practitioners in the art of dancing, have already been pointed out, and may be summed up in saying, that the preparation of the limbs thence derived (for all that is afterwards necessary), and the facilitation which it affords in acquiring the whole arcana of that fascinating art, are such as to render comparatively light the master's future labour and the pupil's task ; to which may be added, if it be any consideration, the parent's expense.



To those who, in future life, are designed for *professional* aspirants in this art, these or similar exercises are *indispensable*. Without them, there is no attaining that steadiness of person and firmness of step, which may be justly regarded by the profession as the *sine qua non*. Nor can the practitioner in ordinary, if not completely possessing these, have any chance of arriving at that conscious ease and grace, which can alone confer the confidence essential to a full participation and enjoyment of the innocent gaieties and elegancies of the ball room.

The Gymnasia, which have of late years engaged so much of the public notice, may be added, with unquestionable advantage, to the exercises above prescribed, if regarded as purely *masculine*, and confined to our male youth, who cannot fail by the employment of them to obtain a vigour and robustness of frame, and a force of

muscular power, which, independently of extraneous means, are rarely possessed, and at the same time are extremely desirable to men. They are always liable to be thrown into situations where the having at command such ample bodily power may prove of the utmost importance to themselves, and to those who may fall under their protection. But to females the author can by no means recommend them : they may be injurious ; and, at all events, the style of the ~~thing~~ is hardly compatible with that delicacy of gesture which, as connected more or less with mind, forms a prominent charm in the female character, and should never be infringed.

If it be necessary to add any thing further in evidence of the value of the aforesaid system of practice, it may be deduced from the comparative observation which the author, in the course of his experience, has made in the schools or

families where it has or has not been duly followed up. In the former case, a full command and action of the limbs being acquired, and the feet well trained before instruction has commenced, they have been able, in following up that instruction, to give a considerable portion of their attention to the government and movement of the body, independently of the action of the feet, a most important point in forming a graceful dancer.

It may not be amiss here to glance once again at the wide difference observable in those instances where, in the absence of the master, his instructions have or have not been duly enforced by those on whom this duty devolved. So considerable, indeed, has been the difference, that in two schools where the author was in attendance, the pupils of the one and of the other could not be supposed, from their contrasted

appearance, to be under the instruction of the same master! or, if so, it would have been thought that he had bestowed all possible attention in the one case, and had been totally negligent in the other. It hardly need be suggested to wise and discreet parents, who have a due sense of justice to themselves, and of regard to their children's advantage, to take cognizance of these matters.

Amongst the mass of variety that has of late issued from the fashionable press, a work has come forth animadverting on ladies' schools, private governesses, masters, &c. It contains much force of acumen, but also betrays a little want of candour! The strictures will, in many instances, be found but too justly applicable—the exceptions, however, are also numerous and striking.

An exposé of mal-practices—whether in this description of establishment, by the “*Roué*,”—or of those in the club-houses by “*Crockford's*,”—or

of any others, wherever else to be found, although it may be perhaps unpalatable to individuals, can never be unworthy the public attention—if we may, thereupon, hope for *moral* advantage (even as it is the object of the foregoing pages to produce *physical*) to the rising generation; nor can such works be brought before the public through a more desirable channel than our fashionable press. Through that channel it is that the fashionable follies of the day, for the most part, come recommended to public adoption; and through the same, therefore, it is to be presumed the public will be best disposed to receive with tractability their antidote.

It may be difficult to prove whether our schools and seminaries are better, or more morally administered now than they were fifty years ago; but it is, at least, fair to expect from the heads of these establishments that they *should*

be so, taking into account their own increased demand on parents, &c.

It is true that the establishments in former times, being comparatively few in number, were, each in itself, of far greater extent, seldom having fewer than fifty or sixty pupils! With tolerable prosperity, school teaching was then, as it is now, a profitable concern. The difference was, that the principals were content to make their fortunes—*presto, ma non troppo*. It must now be done *prestissimo*! It is this subjection of every arrangement in such an establishment to the main point of *making money*, that at once explains how a master, “who can place a scholar at a school,” possesses ample professional capability! No reasonable master is disposed to dispute the school-ladies’ plea for a *per centage*, where they pledge themselves to make good their payments, *at all events*, as they are necessarily subject to

occasional losses from bankruptcies amongst the parents, &c. of their pupils.

The author, in concluding these remarks, desires respectfully, but decidedly, to express his opinion—that the parents, &c. of children brought up at school have *themselves* to blame for the irregularities and abuses there committed, by contenting themselves, and at once making their election, upon the *éclat* alone of the establishment on the one hand, or the *very moderate* terms on the other ; according to their rank in society, or their particular view of the case, instead of instituting a close investigation both into the *general* conduct, and the whole *detail* of the establishment chosen for the abode and education of their children : also into the mode in which every branch of instruction is administered. It is, alas ! not only a common case for parents of rank to feel their minds fully satisfied upon the

*éclat* adverted to without a word of inquiry into any thing that is really important, but even a considerable *exultation*, if they have to say that "their children are placed at Mrs. ——'s establishment, where a carriage is kept!" or "at —— House, the principal of which has a box at the Opera;" or "where the dancing is taught by *Monsieur* ——, and the singing by *Signor* ——!" The parent, on the other hand, with whom economy is the *summum bonum*, remarks with no less satisfaction, and at the same time with equal indifference as to every thing else that may be to be said of the school, that her children are at the Misses ——'s seminary, "where every thing is the most *reasonable* that can be!"

If, instead of this dreadful laxity in a case, than which no one more demands vigilance and circumspection, the wholesome scrupulosity above suggested were exercised, it would inevitably be



followed by a reform in those schools that require it ; nor is it well possible to imagine a subject more properly exciting parental solicitude, or of higher importance to the interests of society.

## CHAPTER VIII.

FOR some thousand of years, in the early stages of the world, dancing was exclusively a religious ceremony. The dance of the Jews, established by the Levitical law to be exhibited at the solemn feasts, is, perhaps, the most ancient upon record. The dancing of David is also frequently quoted; and many commentators have thought that every psalm was accompanied by a distinct dance. In several of the temples, a stage was especially

erected for these exercises ; but in process of time, they seem to have been practised by secular, as well as spiritual performers. The daughters of Shiloh were thus recreating themselves in the vineyards, when they were caught by the young men of the tribe of Benjamin, who presently danced into their good graces and carried them off for wives—a process which is frequently imitated, even in these degenerate days. The heathen, also, could “ sport a toe,” in the very earliest ages. Pindar calls Apollo “ the dancer ;” Homer in one of his hymns, tells us, that this deity capered to the music of his own harp ; and from Callimachus we learn, that the Nereides were proficient in this elegant accomplishment at the early age of nine years. For several centuries it was confined to military movements, when a battle was a grand *ballet of*

*action* ; opposing armies became partners in the dance of death, and cut throats and capers with equal assiduity.

Since those truculent and operatic days, it has been limited to festive and joyous occasions ; but how various the estimation in which it has been held by inconsistent mortals ! Socrates, a wise Grecian, took lessons in this art from Aspasia. Cicero, an enlightened Roman, urges the practice of dancing against Galbinus as a grave and heinous offence.

Of the moderns, many hold it an utter abomination to dance upon a Sunday ; while others signalize the Sabbath by an increased hilarity of heel. In Germany, a band of enthusiastic damsels formerly testified their devotion to St. Vitus, by dancing round his shrine, until they contracted a malady, which still bears his name : the modern

Herrnhuters, of the same district, would suffer martyrdom, rather than heathenize their legs by any similar profanation.

Our own country, at the present moment, possesses a sect of Jumpers, who, seeming to imagine that he who leaps highest must be nearest to heaven, solemnize their meetings by jumping like kangaroos, and justify themselves very conclusively from Scripture, because David danced before the ark—the daughter of Shiloh danced in the yearly festival of the Lord—and the child John, the son of Elizabeth, leapt before it was born !

The Methodists, on the other hand, maintain, in its full latitude, the doctrine of the ancient Waldenses and Albigenses, that as many paces as a man makes in dancing so many leaps he makes towards hell. Even the amiable Cowper, the

poet, suffered his fine mind to be so darkened by bigotry, as to believe, that a great proportion of the ladies and gentlemen whom he saw amusing themselves with dancing at Brighthelmstone, must necessarily be damned; and, in a religious publication now before me, I find it stated, that a sudden judgment overtook a person for indulging in this enormity; a large lump started up in his thigh while dancing; but upon his solemn promise not to repeat the offence, the Lord heard his prayer and removed his complaint.\* A writer in the same work, after denouncing those who admit dancing and other vain amusements into their schools, concludes with an alarming belief, "that this dancing propensity has, in some places, nearly danced the Bible out of the school!"†

\* *Evangelical Magazine* for August, 1812.

† *Ibid*, June, 1808.

In conformity with these *enlightened* views, and in defiance of the sacred writer, who expressly declares that there is '*a time to dance*,' the Methodists exclude from their communion all those who practice dancing, or teach it to their children, while their ministers refuse to administer the sacrament to all persons guilty of frequenting balls.

Let us hope that the increasing good sense of these well meaning, but misguided ascetics, will speedily get the better of such monkish austerities; that the time may come, when they may feel persuaded that our Heavenly Father can contemplate this innocent recreation of his creatures with as much benignity as a parent beholds the gambols of his children; and that the now gloomy inmates of the Tabernacle may justify the change by adopting the beautiful sentiment of Addison—"Cheerfulness is the best hymn to the Deity."

The invention of dancing has been ascribed to different nations or people. The Egyptians, the Grecians, and the Indians, but the most generally received opinion is, that the Egyptians were the first who adapted motion to musical sounds. Some ascribe the invention of dancing to the goddess Rhea ; others to Theseus, who, they say, instituted dancing in the Isle of Delos. The dance performed on that occasion was, it is said, contrived to represent the various turnings and intricate windings of the labyrinth. " The labyrinth," says M. de Guys, in his *Sentimental Journey through Greece*, " is now no more, but the dance it gave birth to exists in its pristine state of excellence." He says again, " At this day the *Greek Brawl* presents you with the tender Ariadne, who leads Theseus through the mazes of the winding dance."



Many proofs of the antiquity of dancing are to be found in the Old Testament. When Moses had miraculously conducted the children of Israel through the Red Sea, he, and his sister Miriam, to testify their grateful thanks to God, in the most public manner, for preserving them and the Israelites from their enemies, the Egyptians, made two great chorusses, the one of men, the other of women, and danced to the music of the song; the account of which makes the greatest part of the fifteenth chapter of Exodus. It is supposed that Moses led the chorus of the men, and that Miriam led that of the women; for we read in verses 20 and 21 of the same chapter, that "Miriam, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances." This dance is beautifully described by Antonius Millileus, in the

sixth book of his *Moses Viator*. The following is a part of this poem :—

“ Let Jacob’s sons their cheerful voices raise,  
In grateful hymns, to their preserver’s praise ;  
Let the glad dance attend th’ harmonious sound,  
And shouts of joy from earth to heav’n rebound !  
This, when the chief had said, on either side  
The troops, obedient to command, divide ;  
He, with his rod, directs th’ attending choirs,  
And first begins the song which heav’n inspires.  
Soon as the men the holy dance had done,  
The Hebrew matrons the same rites begun ;  
Miriam, presiding o’er the female throng,  
Begins, and suits the movement to the song.”

It is observed in the *Encyclopædia*, that the origin of dancing among the Greeks was most certainly the same as among all other nations ; but as they proceeded a certain length in civilization, their dances were of consequence more regular and agreeable than those of the more barbarous nations.

Plato reduces the dances of the ancients to three classes. First, the *Military dances*, which tended to make the body robust, active, and well-disposed for all the exercises of war : second, the *Domestic dances*, which had for their object an agreeable and innocent relaxation and amusement : third, the *Mediatorial dances*, which were made use of in expiations and sacrifices. There were two sorts of military dances, the *Gymnopedique* dance, or dance of children ; and the *Enoplian*, or armed dance. The Spartans had invented the first for an early excitation of the courage of their children, and to lead them on insensibly to the exercise of the armed dance. The *Enoplian*, or *Pyrrhic*, was danced by young men armed *cap-a-pee*, who executed to the sound of the flute, all the proper movements either for attack or for defence. It was composed of four parts : the first, the *podism* or

footing, which consisted in a quick shifting motion of the feet, such as was necessary for overtaking a flying enemy, or for getting away from him when an overmatch. The second part was the *xiphism* : this was a kind of mock fight, in which the dancers imitated all the motions of combatants ; aiming a stroke, darting a javelin, or dexterously dodging, parrying, or avoiding a blow or thrust. The third part, called *komos*, consisted in very high leaps, or vaultings, which the dancers frequently repeated, for better using themselves occasionally to leap over a ditch or spring over a wall. The *terracomos* was the fourth and last part. This was forming a square figure, executed by slow and majestic movements.

Military dances not only gave them great strength and agility of body, but a vast expert-

ness in the use of their weapons, and various evolutions of the art of war.

These dances were at first performed by men alone, and the amusement was afterwards heightened by giving each man a partner of the other sex. This improvement is ascribed to Dædalus, who composed a dance and taught it to seven youths, and as many virgins, that were saved by Theseus from the labyrinth of Crete. This is the dance hinted at by Homer, in his description of the famous shield of Achilles. Those who performed armed dances, were equipped with bucklers, lances, and short swords, which they used with great address and dexterity. Strange as it may seem, that females should intermingle with warriors thus equipped, still more surprising is the dance of the Gallician mountaineers, who, whilst dancing with the females, throw up

their sharp battle-axes fathoms high in the air, and perform some figure with their partner, or play at leap-frog in the interim, and are yet in time to catch their battle-axes. Tacitus has recorded a dance of spears, in use among the gothic nations, in which young lads threw javelins at each other, and moved to and fro uninjured amid the flight of darts.

Lucian takes notice of a dance called the *Hormus*, of which the Lacedæmonians were fond. It was performed by the youth of both sexes. The men endeavoured to exceed each other in the variety of their warlike attitudes; their partners following them with a most becoming modesty and graceful step.

In many of the Greek dances, as has already been observed, their women partook of the amusement, and were not less fond of the exercise than the men. They studied to surpass each

other in every ornament of dress; and the applause which was given to those who excelled, sufficiently gratified their ambition.

Lucian was so great an advocate for dancing, that he wrote a treatise in praise of the exercise; and Homer makes use of the word *dancer*, as an honourable appellation for Meriones, one of his heroes, whose excellence in the art was well known both to his countrymen, the Grecians, and to his enemies, the Trojans, who were able to distinguish him from the other Grecian chiefs in the field of battle by that *superior agility and gracefulness of motion which he had acquired from long practice in the dance.*

Lucian is not the only Greek author that has written in favour of dancing; we may add Aristotle, Athenæus, Zenophon, Plutarch, and others. Plato, in his Commonwealth, has many passages in commendation of dancing; and would

have schools for the exercise of it, maintained at the public charge.\*

If there required an instance of the success of

\* If dancing-schools, under the auspices of government, were established in this country, well conducted, and the masters owing their appointment to merit alone, there is no reason why we should not have to boast competitors for the descendants of Le Picq, Vestris, &c., and we might exchange talent for talent—according to the plan occasionally resorted to on the Continent. But the circumstance that is fatal to the production of good native dancers in this country, either on the stage or otherwise, is, that as soon as a student obtains a little insight into the profession, he sets up for a teacher, and thence ceases, of course, to learn or to practice! But were he bound for a term of years, as in learning a trade, kept to practice, and allowed only to rank as a master, or to appear before the public, when his competence and skill were duly acknowledged by the masters of the establishment, this country might not have to solicit from the French government the *favours* of a Parisian dancer's services, and be refused!\*

\* See Ebers' *Seven Years of the King's Theatre*, p. 66.



an *Englishman* in this art, we could name D'Egville.

In Kennet's Antiquities, it is remarked, that dancing had a considerable share in the votive and funeral games of the Romans. In the solemn processions, all the magistrates appeared in their robes, and the women danced before them.

Athletic exercises, combats, and dancing, were the chief entertainments in all their rural feasts : such as the Agonalia, instituted by Numa Pompilius, in honour of Janus : the Lupercalia, an institution in remembrance of the wolf that preserved Romulus and Remus.

We are assured by Lucian and others, who were eye witnesses of the surprising powers of the pantomime dancers of those days, that it was carried to a degree of perfection hardly to be credited. The events of antiquity, ancient fable,

and the several passions which work upon the human mind, were so justly represented solely by the motions of the body, or pantomime expression, that the spectators were frequently melted into tears; "expressions so natural, images so resembling, a pathos so touching, and pleasantry so agreeable, that the spectators thought they heard what they saw. Gesture alone supplied the sweetness of voice, the energy of discourse, and the charms of poetry!"

The greatest versatility of genius, and the most extensive knowledge of Nature, were requisite for the dancer who was to appear in every character, and to exhibit every affection and passion of the human mind. How well the great masters of the art succeeded in a task so difficult, appears from the astonishment of the barbarian, who, upon seeing a dancer represent five different characters in the compass of one

dance, cried out, "O prodigy! many souls hast thou in one body!" Indeed the Romans, with reason, called a dancer by the name *Pantomime*, which signifies *universal imitator*; so that all the fine arts were comprised in that of dancing, and concurred towards its perfection and embellishment.

Lucian, after enumerating the intellectual accomplishments requisite for the dancer, makes some attempts towards ascertaining the standard of beauty and proportion upon which his dancer should be modelled, and states the qualifications necessary for the ballet-master, which unite in them an assemblage of all that is elegant in refinement and valuable in knowledge. *Poetry* was necessary to ornament—*music* to animate—*geometry* to regulate—and *philosophy* to guide his compositions. *Rhetoric* was required to enable him to move and express the passions—*painting*,

to delineate attitudes, and *sculpture* to form his figures. His conceptions should be easy and natural, his mind lively, his ear nice, judgment sound, imagination fertile, and taste certain in selecting whatever is proper and necessary to his design.

The art of playing pantomime was in the greatest degree of perfection in Augustus Cæsar's time; and dancing was in use in the churches and cathedrals upon solemn festivals, and even gave the name of *choir*\* to those parts of the church now commonly appropriated to the reading of the divine service and to singing.

The Romans seem to have followed the Greeks in this passion for dancing; and the theatrical dances upon the pantomime plan, were in Rome pushed to such a degree of perfection, as is even

\* From the Greek, χορος.

difficult to conceive. Whole tragedies were played, act by act, scene by scene, in pantomime expression.

From the period that dancing was discontinued in churches, it has assumed various styles; and the national style of one country has been partly imitated by others, until dancing has become, to use an artist's term, *neutralized*, so that it is difficult now to distinguish the dance of one nation from that of another; the modern Opera-dancer makes use of any style that suits his purpose, and intermingles the serious with the comic, the grotesque with the *divin caractère*; and as to steps, so that they answer to the time of the music, that seems sufficient in these days; for it is not an uncommon thing to see French steps introduced in Spanish danees, &c., and a pair of *castanets*, rattled above the head of *une*

*jolie fille*, excuses every thing!\* It is then no longer a problem, why dancing has so deteriorated on the stage, or in private, when our judgment is so misled.

\* The most trifling dance that has been seen at our Opera House is the *Tarantula*, which is uniformly encored, and which it is presumed sufficiently justifies the above observation.

## CHAPTER IX.

IN Rollin's ancient history we find the following short history of the origin of teachers of dancing, and of dancers in general. After speaking of the exercises formerly in use by the ancients, it goes on thus—"It is true, these exercises, so illustrious by their founders, and so useful in the ends at first proposed from them, introduced public masters, who taught them to young persons, and, practising them with success, made public show and ostentation of their skill.

This sort of men applied themselves solely to the practice of this art, and, carrying it to an excess, they formed it into a kind of science, by the addition of rules and refinements, often challenging each other out of vain emulation, till at length they degenerated into a profession of people, who, without any employment or merit, exhibited themselves as a sight for the diversion of the public. Our dancing-masters are not unlike them in this respect, whose natural and original designation was to teach youth a graceful manner of walking and a good address; but now we see them mount the stage, and perform ballets in the garb of comedians, capering, jumping, skipping, and making a variety of strange unnatural motions."

How true these remarks are, may be safely left to the discernment of every candid observer.

In Shakspeare's time, according to an enter-



taining author quoted below,\* there appears to have been a greater variety in the styles of dance than at the present day. One of the most favourite upon record, and which our immortal bard has signalized by his notice on more occasions than one, is the *Brawl!* a dance which, if its name be at all connected with our ordinary acceptation, would seem to bespeak no particular tendency to peace and good order. *Brawls* now, as we understand them, are still not without some claim to the stamp of fashion ; they have occasionally the honour of being altogether composed and performed by young scions of our higher orders ! They have also this advantage, that they require no tiresome attendance on the dancing-master ! No ! a few bottles of sparkling inspiring champagne will soon convey to the hopeful student of the brawl—that is, *our brawl*—

\* Doctor Drake.

all necessary instruction and qualification ! It is not a little favourable to the hypothesis—the author humbly submits—that this much esteemed dance is indigenous in our favoured isle, whatever our neighbours across the channel may pretend about this “*braule*,” &c., that we have to boast—at least our sister land, which is all the same thing—the enlivening *reel* ; this we *know* to be ours, and on comparing their titles they may fairly be presumed to be of the same family, and to belong to one and the same clime.

It is greatly to be regretted that in the view of so many charms as are ascribable to these two styles of dance, there exists no certain record that it was in these, or one of them, that Sir Christopher Hatton delighted his queen, or that to his elegant performance of them, he owed his promotion at court. Doctor Drake

affords us the following information regarding these times of the illustrious bard and his royal mistress :—

“ Dancing was an almost daily amusement in the court of Elizabeth ; the queen was peculiarly fond of this exercise, as had been her father, Henry the Eighth ; and the taste for it became so general during her reign, that a great part of the leisure of almost every class of society was spent, and especially on days of festivity, in dancing.

To dance elegantly was one of the strongest recommendations to the favour of her Majesty ; and her courtiers, therefore, strove to rival each other in this pleasing accomplishment ; nor were their efforts, in many instances, unrewarded.

Sir Christopher Hatton, we are told, owed his promotion, in a great measure, to his skill in dancing ; and, in accordance with this anecdote, Gray opens his “ long story ” with an admirable

description of his merit in this department ; which, as containing a most just and excellent picture, both of the architecture and manners of “ the days of good Queen Bess,” as well as of the dress and agility of the knight, we with pleasure transcribe.

Stoke-Pogeis, the scene of the narrative, was formerly in the possession of the Hattons :—

“ In Britain’s isle, no matter where,  
An ancient pile of building stands ;  
The Huntingdons and Hattons there  
Employed the power of Fairy hands

To raise the ceiling’s fretted height,  
Each pannel in achievements clothing ;  
Rich windows that exclude the light,  
And passages that lead to nothing.

Full oft within the spacious walls,  
When he had fifty winters o’er him,  
My grave Lord Keeper led the brawls ;  
The seal and maces danced before him.

His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,  
His high-crown'd hat and satin doublet,  
Mov'd the stout heart of England's Queen,  
Tho' Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it."

The Brawl, a species of dance before alluded to, is derived from the French—*braule* ; "indicating," observes Mr. Douce, "a shaking or swinging motion. It was performed by several persons uniting hands in a circle, and giving each other continual shakes, the steps changing with the tune. It usually consisted of three *pas* and *pied joint*, to the time of four strokes of the bow ; which being repeated, was termed a double brawl. With this dance balls were usually opened."

Shakspeare seems to have entertained as high an idea of the efficacy of a French brawl, as pro-

bably did Sir Christopher Hatton, when he exhibited before Queen Elizabeth; for he makes Moth, in *Love's Labour Lost*, ask Armado—"Master, will you win your love with a French brawl?" and he then exclaims,—“ These betray nice wenches.” That several dances were included under the term brawls, appears from a passage in Shelton's *Don Quixote*;—" After this there came in another artificial dance, of those called brawls :” and Mr. Douce informs us, that amidst a great variety of brawls, noticed in Thoinot Arbeau's treatise on dancing, entitled "*Orchesographie*," occurs a Scotch brawl; and he adds, " that this dance continued in fashion to the close of the seventeenth century."

Another dance of much celebrity at this period, was the *Pavin* or *Pavan*, which, from the so-

lemnity of its measure, seems to have been held in utter aversion by Sir Toby Belch, who, in reference to his intoxicated surgeon, exclaims,—  
“ Then he’s a rogue. After a passy-measure, or a pavin, I hate a drunken rogue.” This is the text of Mr. Tyrwhitt; but the old copy reads,—“ Then he’s a rogue, and a passy-measure’s pavyn,” which is probably correct; for the pavin was rendered still more grave by the introduction of the passamezzo air, which obliged the dancers, after making several steps round the room, to cross it in the middle in a slow step or *cinque pace*. This alteration of time occasioned the term passamezzo to be prefixed to the name of several dances; thus we read of the passamezzo galliard, as well as the passamezzo pavan; and Sir Toby, by applying the latter appellation

to his surgeon, meant to call him, not only a rogue, but a solemn coxcomb. "The pavan, from *pavo*, a peacock," observes Sir John Hawkins, "is a grave majestic dance. The method of dancing it was anciently by gentlemen dressed with a cap and sword; by those of the long robes in their gowns; by princes, in their mantles; and by ladies, in gowns with long trains; the motion whereof in the dance resembled that of the peacock's tail.\* This dance is supposed to have been invented by the Spaniards, and its figure is given with the characters for the step, in the Orchessographia of Thoinot Arbeau."—Of the passamezzo, little is to be said, except that it was a favourite air in the days of

\* From this probably originated the long train worn at court.



Queen Elizabeth. Ligon, in his History of Barbadoes, mentions a passamezzo galliard, which, in the year 1647, a Padre in that island played to him on the lute; "the very same," he says, "with an air of that kind which in Shakspeare's play of Henry the Fourth, was originally played to Sir John Falstaff and Doll Tearsheet, by Sneak the musician, there named."

Of equal gravity with the "doleful pavin," as Sir William Davenant calls it, was the Measure, to tread which, was the relaxation of the most dignified characters in the state, and formed a part of the revelry of the Inns of Court, where the gravest lawyers were often found treading the measures.

Shakspeare puns upon the name of this dance, and contrasts it with the Scotch Jig, in

Much Ado about Nothing, where he introduces Beatrice telling her cousin Hero,—“The fault will not be in the music, cousin, if you be not woo’d in good time; if the Prince be too importunate, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero; wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch Jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch Jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly, modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.”

A more brisk and lively step accompanied the Canary dance, which was likewise very fashionable; “I have seen a medicine,” says Lafew, in

All's Well that Ends Well, alluding to the influence of female charms,—

“ That's able to breathe life into a stone ;  
Quicken a rock, and make you dance a Canary,  
With sprightly fire and motion.”

and Moth advises Armado, when dancing the brawl, to canary it with his feet.

The mode of performing this dance, is thus given by Mr. Douce, from the treatise of Thoinot Arbeau : “ A lady is taken out by a gentleman, and after dancing together to the cadences of the proper air, he leads her to the end of the hall ; this done, he retreats back to the original spot, always looking at the lady. Then he makes up to her again, with certain steps, and retreats as before. His partner performs the same ceremony, which is several times repeated by both

parties, with various strange fantastic steps, very much in the savage style.

Besides the Brawl, the Pavan, the Measure, and the Canary, several other dances were in vogue, under the general titles of Corantoes, Lavoltos, Jigs, Galliards, and Fancies ; but the four which we have selected for more peculiar notice, appear to have been the most celebrated."

## CHAPTER X.

## THE FIRST ASSEMBLY IN RUSSIA.

WHEN Catherina Alexowina was made Empress of Russia, the women were in an actual state of bondage, but she undertook to introduce mixed assemblies, as in other parts of Europe. She altered the women's dress, by substituting the fashions of England; instead of furs she brought in the use of taffeta and damask; and conets and commodes instead of caps of sable.

The women now found themselves no longer shut up in separate apartments, but saw company, visited each other, and were present at every entertainment.

But as the laws to this effect were directed to a savage people, it is amusing enough to see the manner in which the ordinances run. Assemblies were quite unknown among the Russians. The Czarina was satisfied with introducing them, for she found it impossible to render them polite. An ordinance was therefore published according to their notions of breeding, which, as it is a curiosity, we will give :—

1. The person at whose house the assembly is to be kept, shall signify the same by hanging out a bill, or giving some other public notice to persons of both sexes.

2. The assembly shall not be open sooner than four or five o'clock in the afternoon, nor continue longer than ten at night.

3. The master of the house shall not be obliged to meet his guests, or conduct them out, or keep them company ; but though he is exempt from all this, he is to find the chairs, candles, liquors, and all other necessities the company may ask for ; he is likewise to provide them with cards, dice, and every necessary for gaming.

4. There shall be no fixed hour for coming or going away ; it is enough for a person to appear in the assembly.

5. Every one shall be free to sit, walk, or game as he pleases ; nor shall any one go about to hinder him or take exception at what he

does, upon pain of emptying the great eagle (a pint bowl full of brandy) ; it shall be sufficient at entering, or retiring, to salute the company.

6. Persons of distinction, noblemen, superior officers, merchants, and tradesmen of note — head workmen, especially carpenters and persons employed in chancery, are to have liberty to enter the assemblies ; as, likewise, their wives and children.

7. A particular place shall be assigned to the footmen, except those of the house, that there may be room enough in the apartments designed for the assembly.

8. No ladies are to get drunk upon any pretence whatever, nor shall gentlemen be drunk before nine o'clock.

9. Ladies who play at forfeitures, questions, and commands, &c., shall not be noisy or riotous ;



no gentleman shall attempt to force a kiss ; and no person shall offer to strike a woman in the assembly under pain of future exclusion.

Such are the statutes upon this occasion, which, in the very appearance, carry an air of ridicule and satire ; but politeness must enter every country by degrees, and these rules resemble the breeding of a clown—awkward, but sincere.

## EUROPE.

A SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF VARIOUS KINDS OF  
DANCES IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD,  
BY GALLINI AND OTHERS.

### CHAPTER XI.

IN *Britain*, the hornpipe is a dance held as an original of this country. Some of the steps have been used in the English country-dance, particularly by the lower class of people, at village fêtes ; and few English seamen are to be found that are not acquainted with the hornpipe—some dance it in perfection. Boys at school, that are destined

for the navy, generally make a point of learning it. The music is extremely well adapted to the steps, which in general are pleasing. It has been observed by Gallini, that foreign comic dancers on their coming here, apply themselves with great attention to the true study of the hornpipe, and by constant practice acquire the ability of performing it with success in foreign countries, where it always meets with the highest applause when well executed. An instance is given of this some time ago at Venice, at the Opera there, when the theatre was as well provided with good singers and dancers as any other. But they had not the good fortune to please the public. A dancer, luckily for the manager, presented himself, who danced the hornpipe in its due perfection. This novelty took so, and made such full houses, that the

manager, who had begun with great loss, soon saw himself repaired, and was a gainer when he little expected it.

To the highlanders in North Britain, it is said, we are indebted for a dance in the comic vein called the *Scotch reel*, danced sometimes by three, sometimes by four persons. When well danced, it has a very pleasing effect; nothing can be imagined more lively and brilliant than the steps in many of the Scotch dances, and the natives show as much enthusiasm for their own style of dancing as the French feel, if not more; for the Scotch are ready to dance a reel, morning, noon, or night, and they never seem to know when to leave off.

There was a dance, once popular in England, originally adapted from the Moors, and which is still known by the name of Morris-dancing, or Moresca dance. It was danced with swords by persons

oddly disguised, with a great deal of antic rural merriment ; latterly, they were ornamented with bells at their feet, which added much to their effect.

Dancing around a May-pole, has only of late years been discontinued ; and even now a May-pole may be frequently met with in the country.

The origin of the May-pole is as follows :—

The leisure days after seed-time had been chosen by our Saxon ancestors for *folk-motes*, or conventions of the people. It was not till after the Norman conquest, that the Pagan festival of Whitsuntide fully melted into the Christian holiday of Pentecost. Its original name, *Wittentide*, signified the time of choosing the *wits*, or *wise men*, to the *Wittenagemotte*. It was consecrated to Hertha, the goddess of peace and fertility ; and no quarrels might be maintained, no blood shed, during this truce of the goddess. Each village, in the ab-

sence of the baron at the assembly of the nation, enjoyed a kind of Saturnalia. The vassals met upon the common green round the May-pole, where they elected a village lord, or king, as he was called, who chose his queen. He wore an oaken, and she a hawthorn wreath, and together they gave laws to the rustic sports during these sweet days of freedom. The May-pole, then, is the English tree of liberty.

In Spain, they have a dance called *Les Folies d'Espagne*, which is performed either by one or by two, with castanets. There is a dress peculiarly adapted to it, which has a pleasing effect, as well as the dance itself.

In France, their *contre danses* are drawn from the true principles of the art, and the figures and steps are generally very agreeable. No nation cultivates this art with more taste and

delicacy. The *Provençale* dance is most delightfully sprightly, and well imagined. The steps seem to correspond with the natural vivacity and gaiety of the Provençals. This dance is commonly performed to the pipe and tabor.

The Flemish dances run in the most droll vein of true rural humour. The performers seem to be made for the dances, and the dances for the performers; so well assorted are the figures to the representation. Several eminent painters in the grotesque style, Teniers especially, have formed many diverting pictures taken from the life, upon this subject.

At Naples, they have various grotesque dances, which are originals in their kind, being extremely difficult to execute, not only for the variety of the steps, but for the intricacy and uncommonness, or rather singularity of their movements.

While mentioning Naples, that effect of dancing which is said to be manifested in those who are bitten with the *tarantula*, must not be omitted. The original of this opinion, it has been thought, was probably owing to some sensible physician prescribing such violent motion, more likely to be kept up in the patient by the power of music than by any thing else, as might enable him to expel the poison, by being thrown into a copious perspiration, and by other benefits from such a vehement agitation. This, it is supposed, was afterwards abused, and turned into a mere trick, to assemble a crowd and get money, either by sham bites, or by making a kind of show of this method of practice in real ones. It is also from Naples that we have taken the Punchinello dance.

At Florence, they have a dance called *il*



*Treschone.* The country women in the villages are very fond of it. They are, generally speaking, very robust, and are capable of holding out the fatigue of this dance for a long time. To make themselves more light for it, they often pull off their shoes. The dance is opened by a couple, one of each sex ; the woman holds in her hand a handkerchief, which she flings to him she chooses for her next partner, who in his turn has an equal right to dispose of it in the same manner to any woman of the company he chooses. Thus is the dance carried on, without any interruption, till the assembly breaks up.

The favourite dance of the Venetians is what they call the *Furlana*, which is performed by two persons dancing around with the greatest rapidity. Those who have a good ear keep time

with crossing their feet behind ; and some add a motion with their hands, as if they were rowing or tugging at an oar. This dance is practised in several parts of Italy.

The peasants of Tyrol have one of the most pleasant and grotesque dances that can be imagined. They perform it in a sort of holiday dress made of skins, adorned with ribbon. They wear wooden shoes, rather curiously painted, and the women, especially, express rural simplicity and frolic mirth.

The Grisons are attached to an old dance, which is not without its merit, that they would not change for the politest in Europe, any more than they would their dress, to which they are equally attached.

The Hungarians are very noisy in their dances with their iron heels ; but when they are of

an equal size, and dressed in their uniforms, the agility of their steps, and the regularity of dress in the performers, render them a pleasing sight.

The Germans have a dance called the *Allemande*, in which the men and women form a ring; each man holding his partner round the waist, makes her whirl round with almost inconceivable rapidity. They dance in a circle, seeming to pursue one another, in the course of which they execute several leaps, and some pleasing steps when they turn, but so very difficult, as to appear such to professed dancers themselves. When this dance is performed by a numerous company in a large room, and only one circle kept, it has a more pleasing effect than when divided into detached parties.

The Polish nobility have a dance, in which

the magnificence of their dress, and the elegance of the steps, the gracefulness of the attitudes, and the fitness of the music, all contribute to produce a great effect.

The Cossacks have, amidst all their uncouth barbarism (so says my author), a sort of dancing, which they execute to the sound of an instrument somewhat resembling a mandoline, but much larger, and which is diverting, from the extreme vivacity of their steps, and the oddity of the contortions and grimaces with which they exhibit it. For a grotesque dance, there can hardly be imagined any thing more entertaining.

The Russians afford nothing remarkable in their dances, which they now chiefly take from other countries. The dance of dwarfs, with

which the Czar, Peter the Great, solemnized the nuptials of his niece and the Duke of Courland, was probably rather a particular whim of his own, than a national usage.

## ASIA.

IN Turkey, dances have been, as of old in Greece, and elsewhere, instituted in form of a religious ceremony. The *Dervishes*, who are a kind of devotionists, execute a dance called the *Semaat* in a circle, to a strange wild symphony; when holding one another by the hand, they turn round with such rapidity, that, with pure giddiness, they often fall down in heaps upon one another.

They have also in Turkey, as well as in India and Persia, professed dancers, especially of the female sex, under the name of dancing-girls, who are bred up from their childhood to the profession ; and are always sent for to any great entertainment, public or private, as at feasts, wedding ceremonies, &c. They execute their dances to a symphony of various instruments, resembling the ancient ones, the *tympanum*, the *crotala*, the *cymbals*, and the like, as well as to songs, being a kind of small dramatic compositions, or what may be properly called *ballads*, which is the true word for a song at once sung and danced : *ballare* signifying to dance ; and *ballata*, a song, composed to be danced to. It is probable that from these eastern dances, which are undoubtedly very ancient, came the name among the Romans, of *balatrones*.

Nothing can be imagined more graceful, or more expressive, than the gestures and attitudes of those dancing-girls, which may properly be called the eloquence of the body, in which, indeed, most of the Asiatics and the inhabitants of the southern climates constitutionally excel, from a sensibility more exquisite than is the attribute of the more northern people; but a sensibility balanced by too many disadvantages to become the object of envy.

The *Siamese*, we are told, have three dances, called the *Cone*, the *Lacone*, and the *Raban*. The *cone* is a figure dance. Those who dance are armed and masked, and seem to be fighting rather than dancing. It is a kind of Indian Pyrrhic. Their masks represent the most frightful, hideous countenances of wild beasts or demons, that fancy can invent. In the *Lacone* the performers sing



commutually stanzas of verses, containing the history of their country. The *Raban* is a mixed dance of men and women, not martial nor historical, but purely gallant; in which the dancers have all long false nails of copper. They sing in this dance, which is only a slow march, without any high motions, but with a great many contortions of body and arms. Those who dance in the *Raban* and *Cone* have high gilt caps like sugar-loaves. The dance of the *Lacone* is appropriated to the dedication of their temples, when a new statue of their *Sommona-codom* is set up.

In many parts of the East, at their weddings, in conducting the bride from her house to the bridegroom's, as in Persia especially, they make use of professional music and dancing. But, in the religious ceremonies of the Gentoos, when,

at stated times, they draw the triumphal car, in which the image of the deity of the festival is carried, the procession is intermixed with troops of dancers of both sexes, who proceed in chorus, leaping, dancing, and falling into strange antics, as the procession moves along, of which they compose a part; these adapt their gestures and steps to the sounds of various instruments of music.

## AFRICA.

THE spirit of dancing prevails almost beyond imagination among both men and women in most parts of Africa. It is even more than instinct ; it is a rage in some countries of that part of the globe.

Upon the Gold coast especially, the inhabitants are so passionately fond of it, that in the midst of their hardest labour, if they hear a person sing, or any musical instrument played, they cannot refrain from dancing.

There are even well attested stories of some Negroes flinging themselves at the feet of an European playing on the fiddle, entreating him to desist, unless he had a mind to tire them to death, it being impossible for them to cease dancing while he continued playing. Such is the irresistible passion for dancing among them.

It is the custom for the greater part of the inhabitants of a village or town, to assemble together most evenings of the year at the market-place, to dance and make merry for an hour or two before bed time. On this occasion they appear in their best attire. The women, who come before the men, have a number of little bells tinkling at their feet. The men carry little fans, or rather whisks in their hand, made of the tails of elephants and horses, much like brushes used to brush pictures. They meet

usually about sunset. Their music consists of drums, flutes, and horns. The men and women who compose the dance, divide into couples, facing each other as in our English country-dances, and forming a general dance, fall into many wild ridiculous postures, advancing and retreating, leaping, stamping on the ground, bowing their heads as they pass each other, and muttering certain words ; then snapping their fingers, sometimes speaking loud, at other times whispering ; moving now slow, now quick, and shaking their fans. The women sometimes laying straw ropes in circles on the ground, jump into, or dance round them, and clicking them up with their feet, cast them in the air, catching them as they fall with their hands.

They are strangely delighted with these gambols ; but do not like to be seen at them by

strangers. After an hour or two spent in this kind of exercise, they retire to their respective homes.

They have also their kind of Pyrrhic dances, which they execute by mock skirmishing in cadence, and striking on their targets with their weapons.

## AMERICA.

IN this part of the world, nothing is a stronger proof of the universality of dancing, of its being, in short, rather a human instinct than an art, than the fondness for dancing every where diffused over this vast continent.

IN Brazil, the dancers, whether men or women, make a point of dancing bare-headed. The reason of this is not mentioned; it cannot, however, be thought a very serious one, since

nothing can be more comical than their gestures, their contortions of body, and the signs they make with the head to each other.

In Mexico, they have also their dances and music, but in the most uncouth and barbarous style. For their symphony they have wooden drums, something in the form of a kettle-drum, with a kind of pipe or flageolet made of a hollow cane or reed, but very grating to an European ear. It is observed they love every thing that makes a noise, how disagreeable soever the sound may be. They will hum something like a tune, when they dance thirty or forty in a circle, stretching out their hands and laying them on each others' shoulders. They stamp and jump, and use the most antic gestures for several hours, till they are heartily weary. And one or two of the company sometimes step out of the ring, to

---



make sport for the rest, by showing feats of activity, throwing up their lances in the air, catching them again, bending backwards and springing forwards with great agility. Then, when they are in a violent perspiration from this exercise, they will frequently jump into the water without the least bad consequences to their health. Their women have their dancing and music too by themselves; but never mingle in those of the men.

In Virginia they have two different kinds of dancing; the first either single, or at the most, in small companies; or, secondly, in great numbers together, but without having any regard either to time or figure.

In the first kind, one, two, or three, at the most dance, while, during their performance, the rest, who are seated round them in a ring,

sing as loud as they can scream, and ring their little bells. Sometimes the dancers themselves sing, dart terribly threatening looks, stamp their feet upon the ground, and exhibit a thousand antic postures and grimaces.

In the other dance, consisting of a numerous company of performers, the dance is executed round stakes set in the form of a circle, adorned with some sculpture, or round about a fire, which they light in a convenient place. Every one has his little bell, his bow and arrow in his hand. They also cover themselves with leaves, and thus equipped, begin their dance. Sometimes they set three young women in the midst of the circle.

In Peru, the manner of dancing has something very particular. Instead of laying any stress on the motion of the arms, in most of their dances

their arms hang down, or are wrapped up in a kind of mantle, so that nothing is seen but the bending of the body, and the activity of their feet. They have, however, many figure dances, in which they lay aside their cloaks or mantles; but the graces they add are rather actions than gestures.

The Peruvian Creolians dance after the same manner, without laying aside their long swords, the point of which they contrive to keep up before them so that it may not hinder them from rising or in coupeeing, which is sometimes to such a degree that it looks like kneeling.

They have a dance there, adopted from the natives, which they call *Zapatas*, (shoes), because in dancing they alternately strike with their heels and toes, taking some steps, and coupeeing, as they traverse the ground.

Among the savages of North America, we are told there are various dances practised, such as the *Calumet*, the Leader's dance, the War dance, the Marriage dance, the Sacrifice dance, all of which respectively differ in the movements, and some, amidst all the wildness of their performance, are not without grace. But the dance of the Calumet is esteemed the finest ; this is used at the reception of strangers whom they mean to honour, or of ambassadors to them on public occasions. This dance is commonly executed in an oval figure.

The Americans, in some parts, prescribe this exercise by way of physic, in their distempers ; a method of treatment not, it seems, unknown to the ancients ; but, in general, their motive for dancing is the same as with the rest of the world, to give demonstrations of joy and welcome to

their guests, or to divert themselves. On some occasions, indeed, they make them a part of the ceremony at their assemblies upon affairs, when even their public debates are preceded by dancing, as if they expected that that exercise would rouse their mental faculties and clear their heads. The War dance is also used by them, by way of proclamation of war against their enemies.

The foregoing summary sketch of some of the various dances which are practised in different parts of the globe, and which, described universally and minutely, would fill whole volumes, may serve to show that Nature, in all parts of the inhabited world, has given to man the instinct of dancing, as well as that of speaking or singing. But it certainly depends on the nations who encourage the polite arts, once more to carry this

accomplishment to that pitch of excellence of which the history of the Greeks and Romans shows it to have been susceptible among the ancients, however the moderns may have hitherto fallen short of that degree of perfection.



## EPILOGUE.

TO A LADY WHO LOVED DANCING:

WRITTEN BY THE LATE JUDGE BURNET.

---

MAY I presume in humble lays,  
My *dancing* fair, thy steps to praise ?  
While this grand maxim I advance,  
That human kind, both man and woman,  
Do *dance*, is evident and common ;  
*David* himself, that god-like king,  
We know could *dance* as well as *sing* ;  
Folks who at court would keep their ground  
Must *dance* the year attendance round ;  
Whole nations *dance* ; gay, frisking France  
Has led the nation many a *dance* ;



And some believe both France and Spain  
Resolve to *take us out* again.  
All Nature is one ball, we find ;  
The water *dances* to the wind ;  
The sea itself, at night and noon,  
Rises and *capers* to the moon ;  
The moon around the earth does tread  
A Cheshire round in buxom red ;  
The earth and planets round the sun  
*Dance* ; nor will their *dance* be done  
Till Nature in one mass is blended ;  
Then we may say, *the ball is ended*.

THE END.



